美味しんぼ

5

雁屋 哲
花咲アキラ

装丁／海野一雄
カバー・フォト／奥谷　仁

美味しんぼ

5 青竹の香り

作・雁屋 哲
画・花咲アキラ

BIG COMICS

美味しんぼ 5

青竹の香り

作・雁屋 哲　画・花咲アキラ

小学館
BC 755

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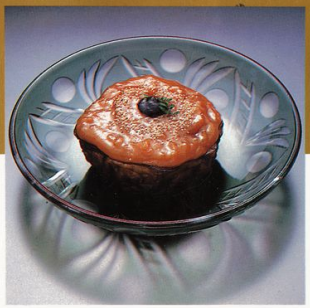

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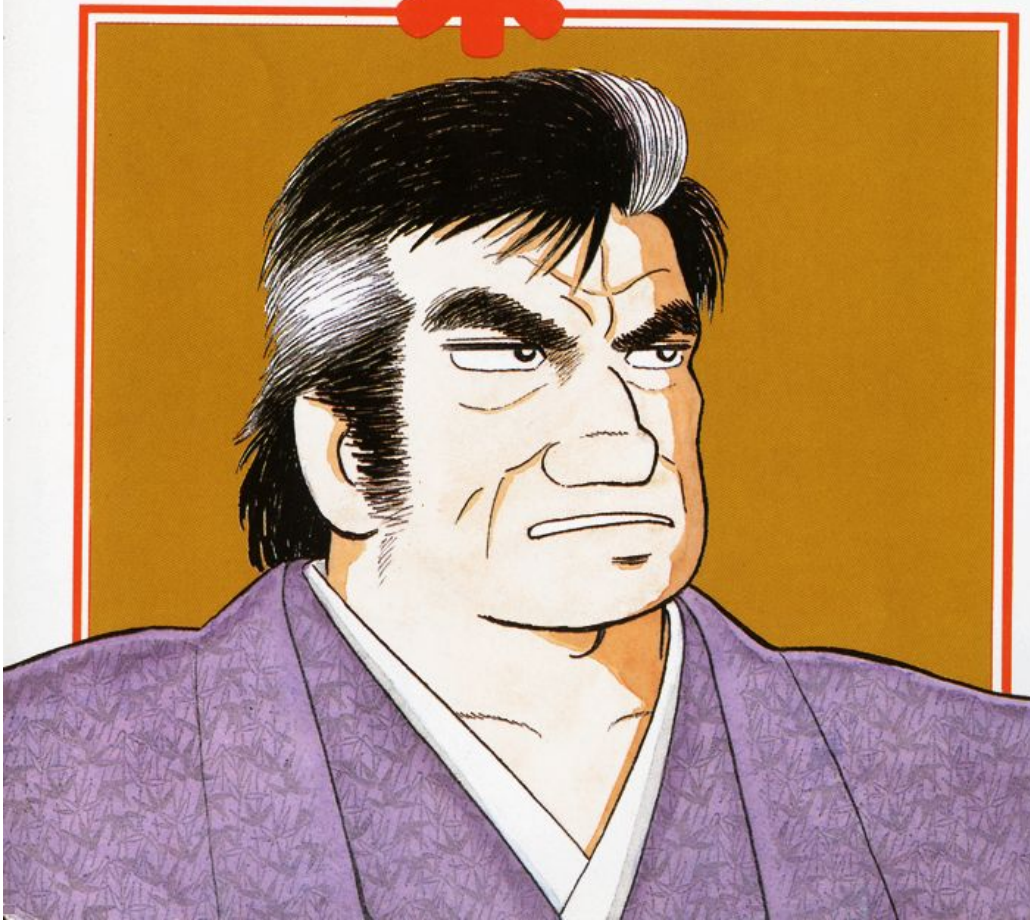
■中央・スズキの奉書焼き、松江の代表料理として、有名。
手前の椀は、宍道湖のシジミ。

美味(おい)しんぼ



美味しんぼ

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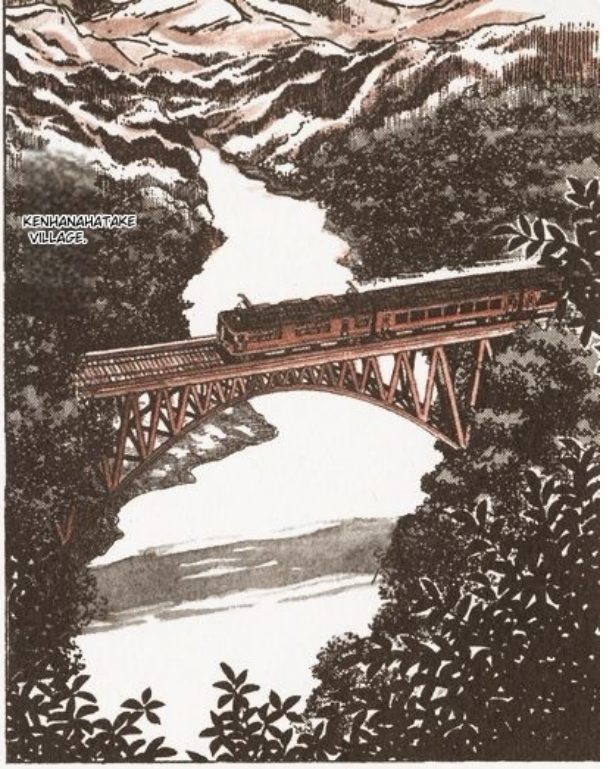
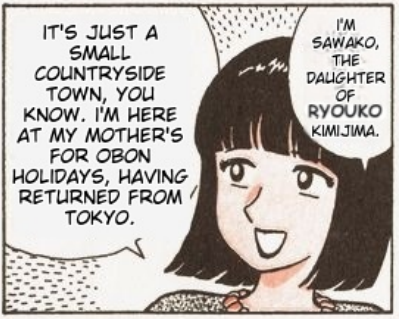
第1話
味噌の仕込み

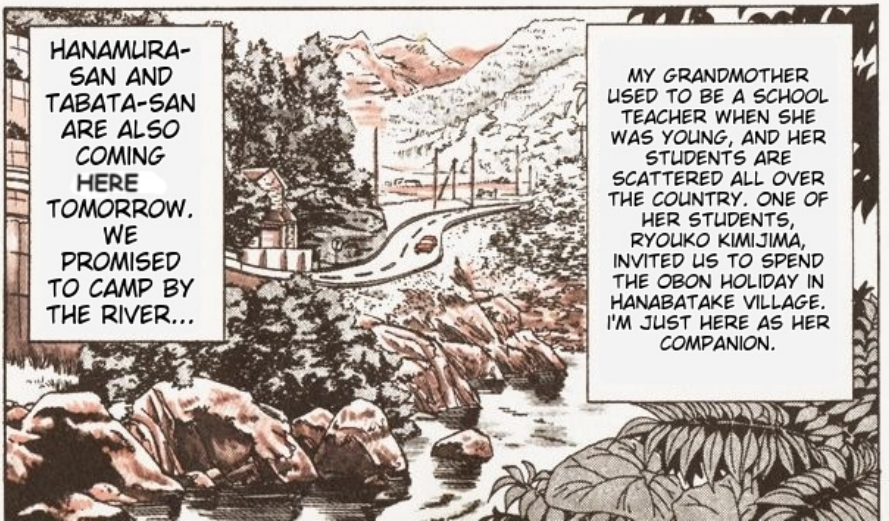

KENHANAHATAKE VILLAGE.

WELCOME!
OH, ARA SAWAKO, HOW KIND OF YOU TO VISIT.


I'M SAWAKO, THE DAUGHTER OF RYOUKO KIMIJIMA.
IT'S JUST A SMALL COUNTRYSIDE TOWN, YOU KNOW. I'M HERE AT MY MOTHER'S FOR OBON HOLIDAYS, HAVING RETURNED FROM TOKYO.

HELLO. NICE TO MEET YOU!
YUKO, MY GRANDDAUGHTER, WORKS AT THE EAST-WEST NEWSPAPER.

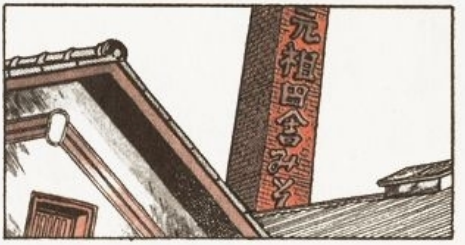
HEY, 'OISHINBO' VOLUME 5.

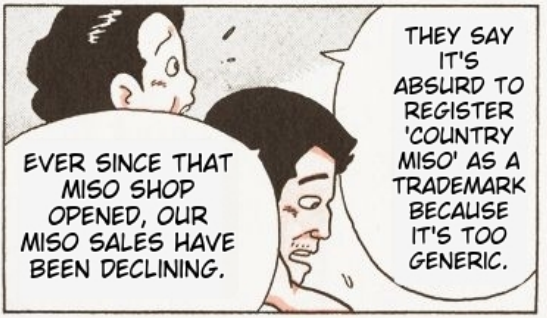


DR. KURITA, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR COMING!!

THAT MISO FACTORY NEAR THE STATION IS RUN BY A COMPANY CALLED 'DAIMYO-KA,' BACKED BY A BIG CORPORATION, YOU KNOW!
THEY NOT ONLY USED OUR TRADEMARK 'ORIGINAL COUNTRY MISO' WITHOUT PERMISSION BUT ALSO FILED A LAWSUIT AGAINST ME TO INVALIDATE MY TRADEMARK REGISTRATION.

OH, DR. KURITA, YOU'RE SUCH A CHARACTER!
OH MY, YOKO, YOU'VE GAINED WEIGHT, HAVEN'T YOU? SEEMS LIKE YOUR OLD BIG-EATER HABITS DIE HARD.

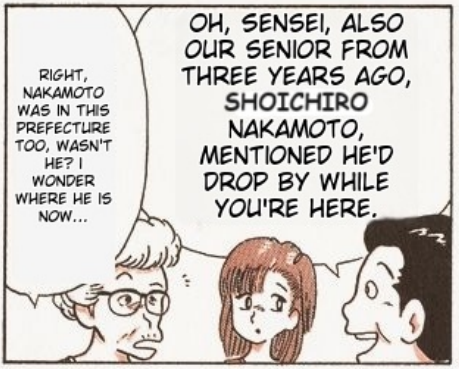



EVER SINCE THAT MISO SHOP OPENED, OUR MISO SALES HAVE BEEN DECLINING.
THEY SAY IT'S ABSURD TO REGISTER 'COUNTRY MISO' AS A TRADEMARK BECAUSE IT'S TOO GENERIC.

A LAWSUIT!?

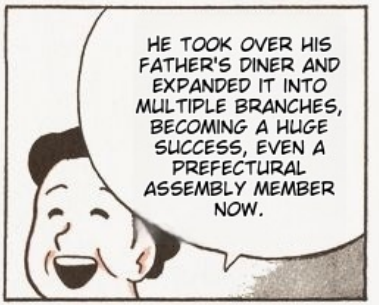
SUCH A CRUEL SITUATION, ISN'T IT?
GRRRR, I WON'T FORGIVE ANYONE WHO DARES TO MAKE MY STUDENTS SUFFER LIKE THAT!!

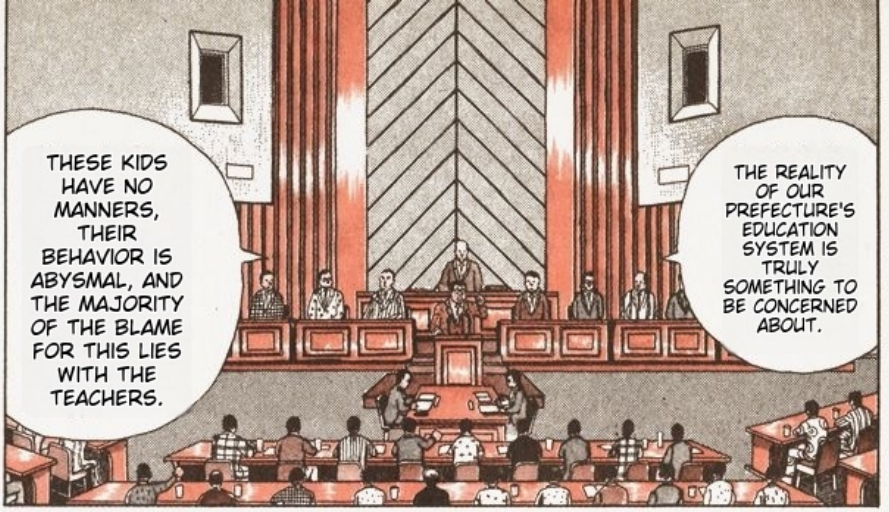
IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE OUR HOUSE GOES UNDER. THEY ARE JUST WAITING FOR THAT, WITH THEIR HIGHER FINANCIAL POWER.
WE ARE IN COURT, RIGHT? IT'S A HUGE BLOW TO US IN TERMS OF TIME AND EXPENSES...


OH, SENSEI, ALSO OUR SENIOR FROM THREE YEARS AGO, SHOICHIRO NAKAMOTO, MENTIONED HE'D DROP BY WHILE YOU'RE HERE.
RIGHT, NAKAMOTO WAS IN THIS PREFECTURE TOO, WASN'T HE? I WONDER WHERE HE IS NOW...

I APOLOGIZE, SENSEI, FOR SHARING SUCH SAD STORIES WITH YOU.
SAY, SENSEI, HAVE SOME SWEETS. I'LL PREPARE DINNER, SO PLEASE LET ME HANDLE EVERYTHING, OKAY?

A PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY MEMBER, HUH...


HE TOOK OVER HIS FATHER'S DINER AND EXPANDED IT INTO MULTIPLE BRANCHES, BECOMING A HUGE SUCCESS, EVEN A PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY MEMBER NOW.


THESE KIDS HAVE NO MANNERS, THEIR BEHAVIOR IS ABYSMAL, AND THE MAJORITY OF THE BLAME FOR THIS LIES WITH THE TEACHERS.
THE REALITY OF OUR PREFECTURE'S EDUCATION SYSTEM IS TRULY SOMETHING TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT.

QUITE AUDACIOUS COMING FROM SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER TO GREET THEIR OWN MENTOR WHO TRAVELED FROM AFAR, DON'T YOU THINK?
SO, ACTING ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY, HUH...

SHOICHIRO, REMEMBER THAT TIME IN SIXTH GRADE WHEN YOU POOPED YOUR PANTS IN THE MIDDLE OF CLASS...
MISS KURITA, PLEASE STOP!!!

NO, GRANDMA, THEY'RE IN A MEETING RIGHT NOW.
O-OH, MISS KURITA!!

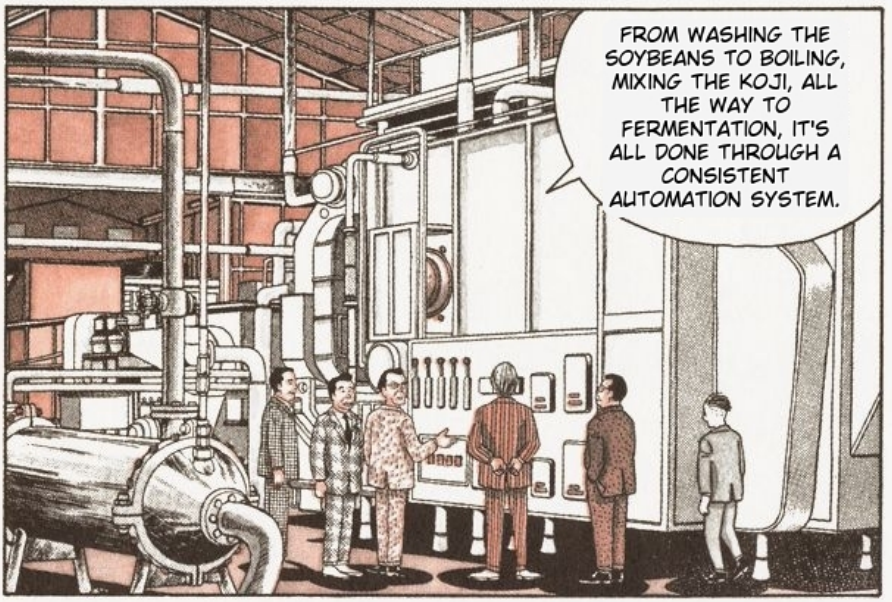
.....

HEY, 'OISHINBO' VOLUME 5.

HE'S A DRIVER, A BAGGAGE HANDLER, A HANDYMAN, AND A COOK, ALL ROLLED INTO ONE.
HE SAID HE COULDN'T REPAY THE MONEY, SO WE DECIDED HE'D WORK IT OFF THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE.
MR. YAMAOKA BORROWED MONEY FROM TABATA AFTER LOSING BIG AT THE HORSE RACES, AND THEN HE TRIED TO VANISH.
I HAD NO IDEA MR. YAMAOKA WAS COMING TOO.
OH, HELLO THERE.
OH, YOU WERE AT THE BIRD CUISINE RESTAURANT BEFORE...
WELCOME.
I SEE...
THIS IS PATHETIC... IF ONLY THOSE DAMN HORSES WERE MORE DEPENDABLE...
HUH?
I'VE MET MR. YAMAOKA BEFORE.
I'M TABATA. THAT'S YAMAOKA, OUR SERVANT.
I'M HANAMURA.
THAT'S SO LIKE MR. YAMAOKA.
IT WAS BECAUSE TOMII-SAN ORDERED ME TO GO.
ALTHOUGH YOU WERE SITTING IN THE VERY FRONT ROW SNORING LOUDLY...
I WORK AS A DESIGNER AT A HAUTE COUTURE SHOP IN AOYAMA. MR. YAMAOKA CAME FOR AN INTERVIEW WHEN OUR SHOP HAD A FASHION SHOW LAST YEAR.

THE GOVERNOR!?
TOMORROW, HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR IS GOING TO INSPECT YOUR HOUSE AND THE MISO FACTORY IN FRONT OF THE STATION!
WHY THE SUDDEN INSPECTION...?
OH, MAYOR.
THIS IS BAD, REALLY BAD!
HEY NOW! SHOICHIRO WORKED HIS TAIL OFF FOR THAT, YOU KNOW!
WELL, YEAH.
HOWEVER...
THIS IS A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY! WE'LL LODGE A COMPLAINT TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR ABOUT THE HIGH-HANDEDNESS OF THE 'DAIMYO-KA' COMPANY.
WELL, FOR THAT TO HAPPEN, YOU GUYS NEED TO TUG AT THE HEARTSTRINGS OF THE GOVERNOR...
THE GOVERNOR SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING FOR YOUR SAKE.
HEY, YAMAOKA, A BEER!
OH, THANKS!

WELL, WELL... MISS SAWAKO SURE IS A FAMILIAR ONE, HUH?
WHAT A SPLENDID DRINK, I'M FEELING GOOD ABOUT THIS.
ゲビ
WE DID IT!!
ゲビ
WOW, IT'S HUGE! WITH THIS ONE FISH, WE'VE GOT ENOUGH FOR TONIGHT'S SIDE DISH!
LET'S COMPARE, THE MISO PACKED IN PLASTIC BUCKETS BY THE COMPANY 'DAMEIKA,' AND THE MISO WRAPPED IN BAMBOO SKIN IS FROM OUR PLACE.
SO, HOW ABOUT THE MISO FROM 'DAMEIKA'?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
THIS MIGHT JUST WORK, YOU KNOW.
MY OLD MAN IS THE TOP KOI FISH CATCHER AROUND THESE PARTS, YOU KNOW.
IT'S A SPLENDID KOI, I TELL YOU.


FROM WASHING THE SOYBEANS TO BOILING, MIXING THE KOJI, ALL THE WAY TO FERMENTATION, IT'S ALL DONE THROUGH A CONSISTENT AUTOMATION SYSTEM.

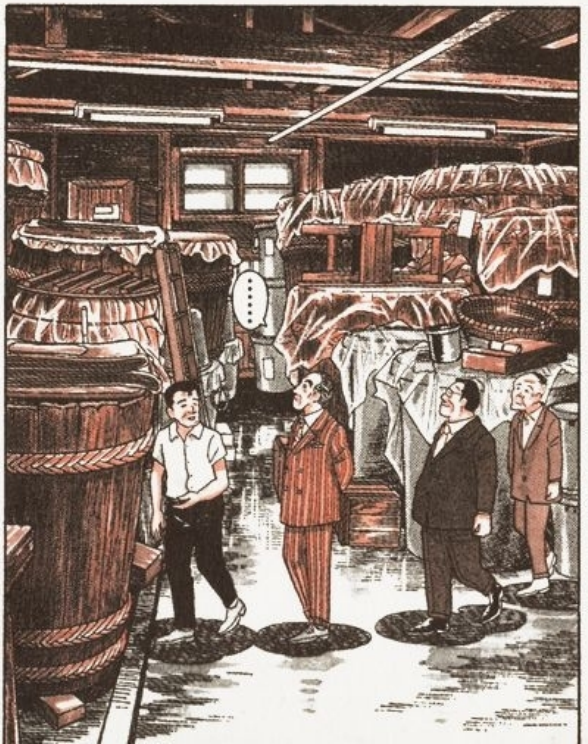
WELL, THIS MAKES MASS PRODUCTION POSSIBLE, DOESN'T IT?
YES, CLEANLINESS IS OUR TOP PRIORITY...

OH, HOW FRIGHTENINGLY MODERN, NOT A SINGLE SCENT IN THE AIR.
GOVERNOR KEIGO HIROYAMA (60 YEARS OLD) OF PREFECTURE X.

BY USING THE LATEST BREWING TECHNOLOGY, WE CAN PRODUCE IT IN JUST ONE MONTH.
IT IS OUR DUTY AS MANUFACTURERS TO SUPPLY IN LARGE QUANTITIES AT A LOW COST...

I SEE, THAT'S QUITE THE PROGRESS, ISN'T IT?

YES, THAT'S WHY WE CAN SUPPLY IT AT A LOW COST.
WHAT, IN JUST ONE MONTH!?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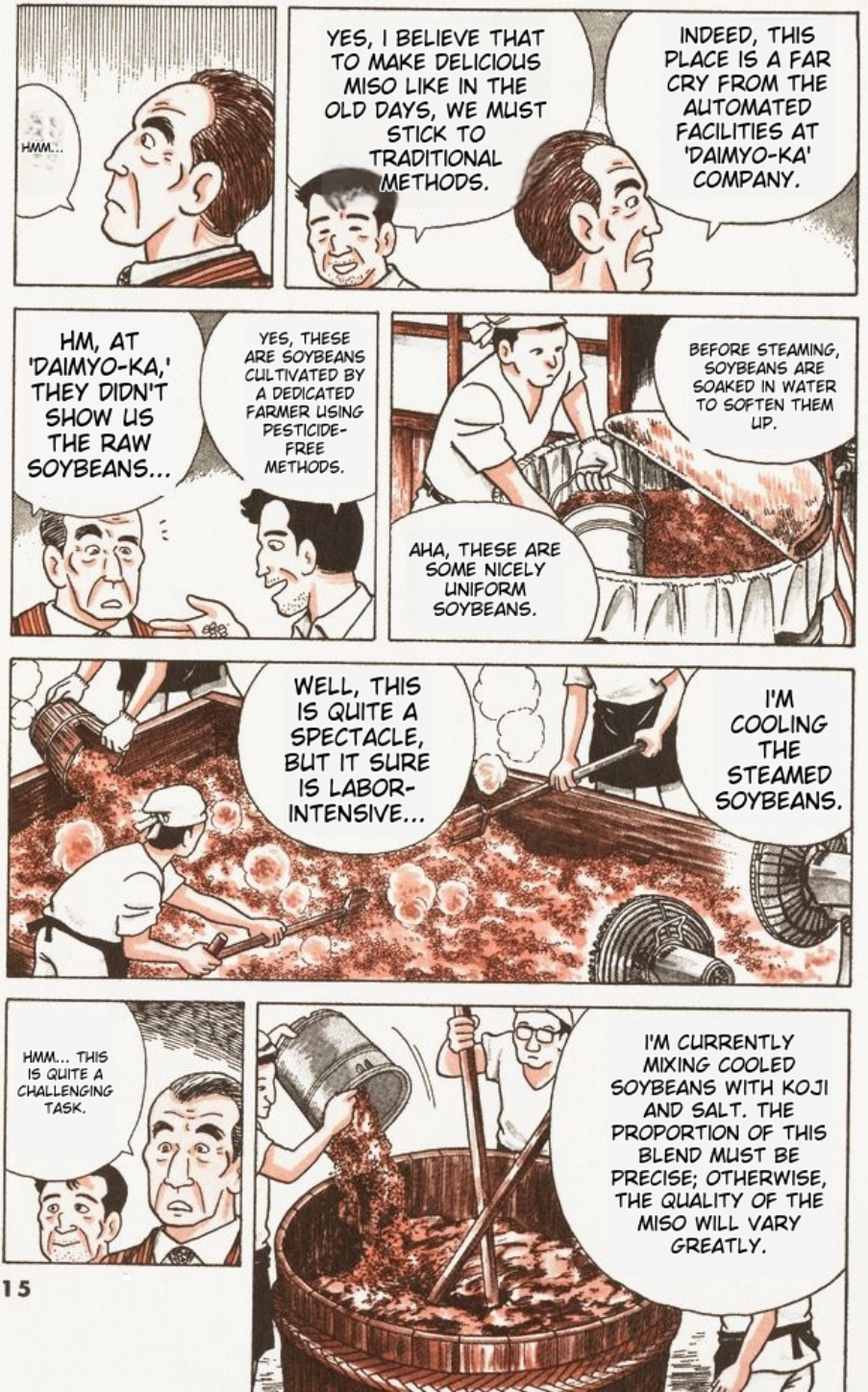
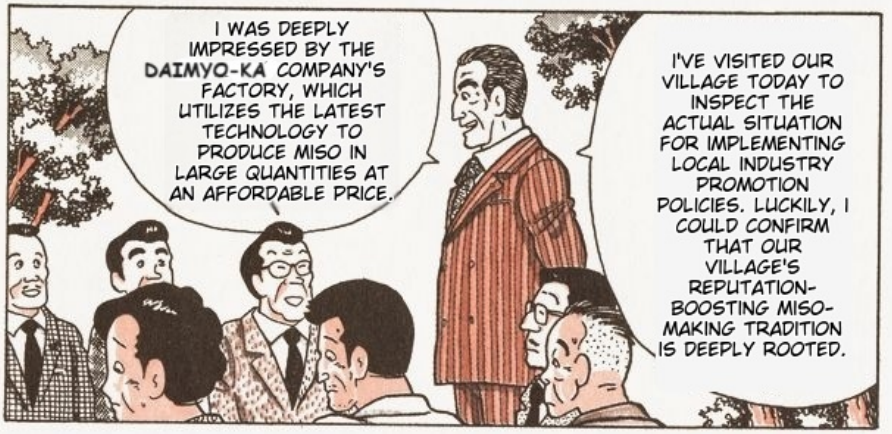

HMM...
YES, I BELIEVE THAT TO MAKE DELICIOUS MISO LIKE IN THE OLD DAYS, WE MUST STICK TO TRADITIONAL METHODS.
INDEED, THIS PLACE IS A FAR CRY FROM THE AUTOMATED FACILITIES AT 'DAIMYO-KA' COMPANY.
HM, AT 'DAIMYO-KA,' THEY DIDN'T SHOW US THE RAW SOYBEANS...
YES, THESE ARE SOYBEANS CULTIVATED BY A DEDICATED FARMER USING PESTICIDE-FREE METHODS.
BEFORE STEAMING, SOYBEANS ARE SOAKED IN WATER TO SOFTEN THEM UP.
AHA, THESE ARE SOME NICELY UNIFORM SOYBEANS.
WELL, THIS IS QUITE A SPECTACLE, BUT IT SURE IS LABOR-INTENSIVE...
I'M COOLING THE STEAMED SOYBEANS.
HMM... THIS IS QUITE A CHALLENGING TASK.
I'M CURRENTLY MIXING COOLED SOYBEANS WITH KOJI AND SALT. THE PROPORTION OF THIS BLEND MUST BE PRECISE; OTHERWISE, THE QUALITY OF THE MISO WILL VARY GREATLY.

HMM, THAT'S CALLED QUICK FERMENTATION, HUH? PROBABLY BECAUSE THEY USE VARIOUS CHEMICALS AND SEASONINGS.
A WELL-MIXED COMBINATION OF SOYBEANS, KOJI, AND SALT IS PLACED IN THIS FERMENTATION BARREL, WEIGHTED DOWN, AND LEFT TO REST. AFTER A YEAR, MISO IS READY.
WHAT, YOU'RE GOING TO LET IT REST FOR A WHOLE YEAR!? THE DAIMYO-KA COMPANY SAID THEY CAN MAKE IT IN JUST A MONTH.
I SEE, BUT IF THE TASTE IS THE SAME, ISN'T IT BETTER TO HAVE IT DONE IN A MONTH RATHER THAN A YEAR?
EH, WELL, THE TRUE FLAVOR CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED BY LETTING NATURAL ENZYMES WORK THEIR MAGIC OVER TIME.
NEVERTHELESS, WITH TECHNOLOGY ADVANCING SO MUCH, CLINGING TO OLD WAYS FOREVER SEEMS FUTILE, DOESN'T IT?
W-WELL, THAT'S...
IT'S TOUGH WHEN MANAGEMENT STRUGGLES DUE TO A LACK OF TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION, THEN THEY EASILY SEEK AID FROM THE COUNTRY OR THE PREFECTURE.
I WONDER IF PULLING THE GOVERNOR OUT AT MR. NAKAMOTO'S REQUEST WAS ACTUALLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE...
HMM...
Y-YEAH...

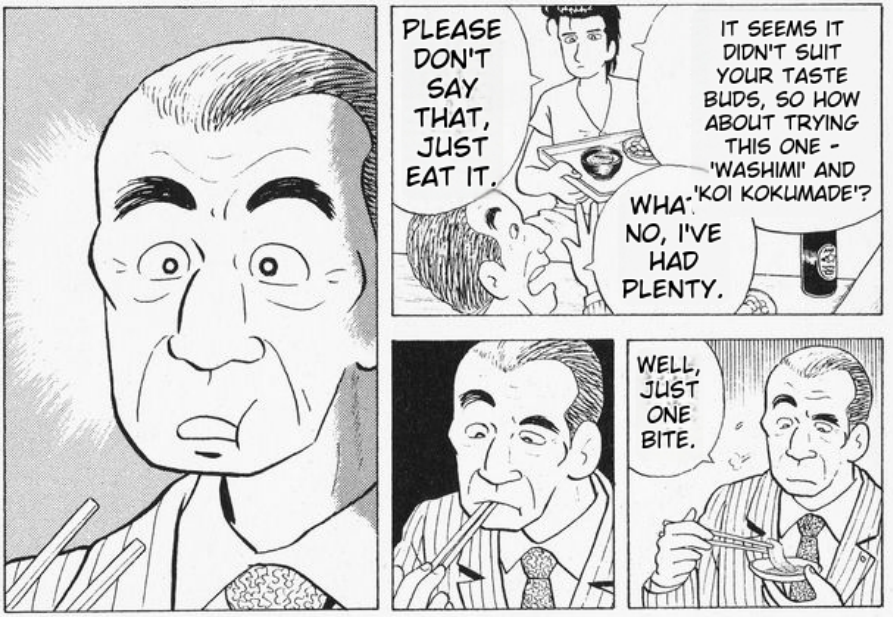

I WAS DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY THE DAIMYO-KA COMPANY'S FACTORY, WHICH UTILIZES THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY TO PRODUCE MISO IN LARGE QUANTITIES AT AN AFFORDABLE PRICE.
I'VE VISITED OUR VILLAGE TODAY TO INSPECT THE ACTUAL SITUATION FOR IMPLEMENTING LOCAL INDUSTRY PROMOTION POLICIES. LUCKILY, I COULD CONFIRM THAT OUR VILLAGE'S REPUTATION-BOOSTING MISO-MAKING TRADITION IS DEEPLY ROOTED.

WE WILL STRIVE FOR EVEN GREATER TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION.
THANK YOU, GOVERNOR.

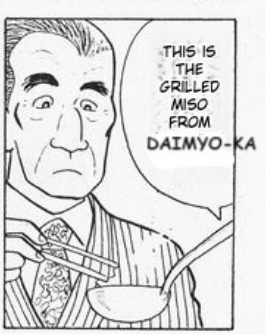
AS OUR PREFECTURE, WE WOULD LIKE TO OFFER AS MUCH SUPPORT AS POSSIBLE TO THE DAIMYO-KA COMPANY.
BY FOLLOWING THE APPROACH OF THE DAIMYO-KA COMPANY, I BELIEVE MISO-MAKING WILL FURTHER FLOURISH.

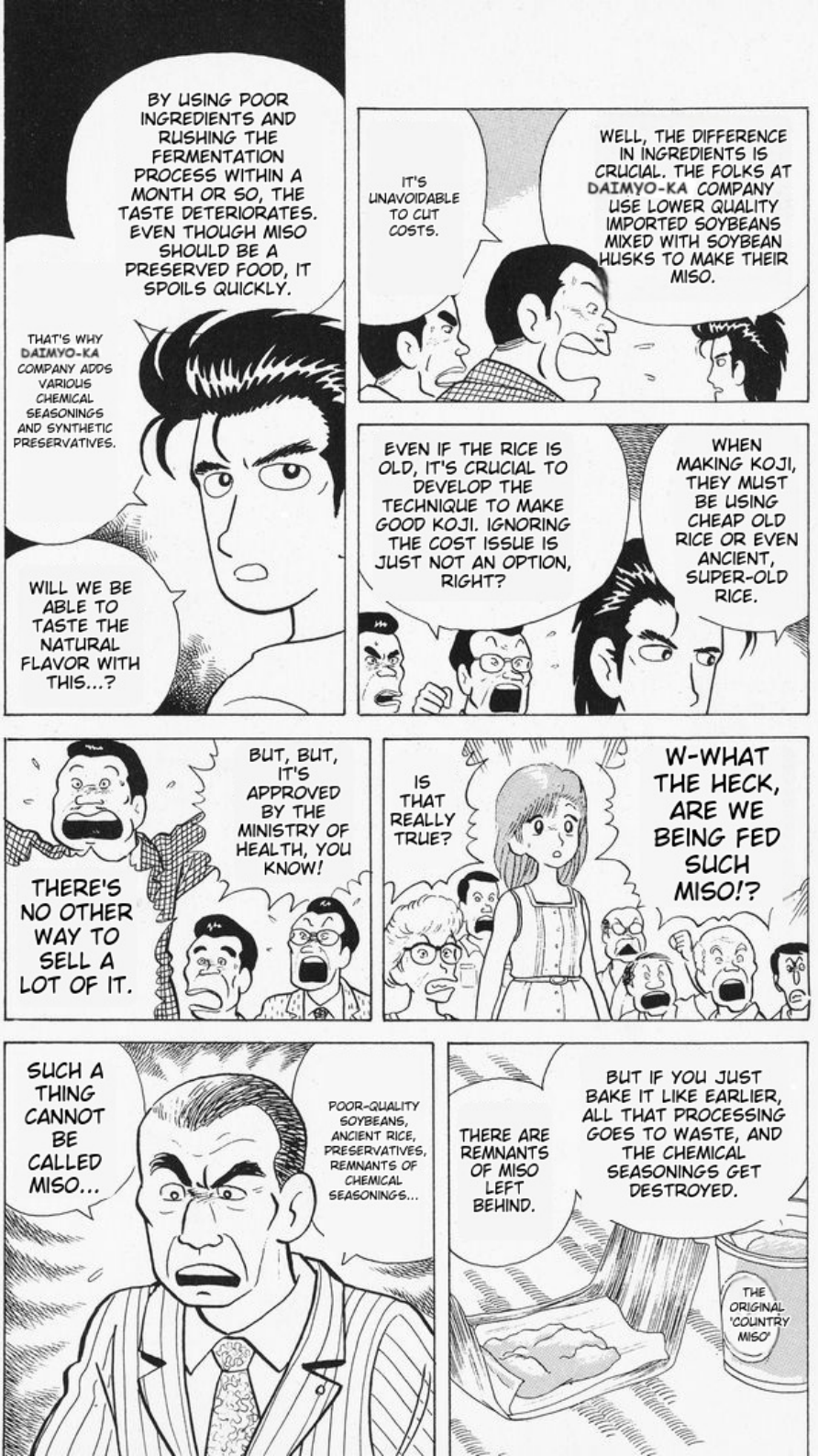
OH, I ABSOLUTELY ADORE CARP."
WITH MUCH GRATITUDE FOR YOUR VISIT, WE SHALL NOW PRESENT THE VILLAGE'S SPECIALTY CARP DISH FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT."
COOPERATION WITH THE 'DAIMYO-KA' COMPANY...!?"
W-WHAT ON EARTH IS HAPPENING?
OH, DON'T TRY TO COMFORT ME LIKE THAT."
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? THE REAL COMPETITION STARTS NOW."
I DID AS YOU INSTRUCTED, SET UP THE BANQUET HALL, AND NOW EVERYTHING HAS GONE TO WASTE... DID YOU HEAR WHAT THE GOVERNOR JUST SAID?"
FIRST, LET ME PREPARE THE DISH."
WELL DONE, WE'VE MANAGED TO CATCH A LIVE CARP."
THE DISH WILL BE SERVED WITH A HOT MUSTARD VINEGAR MISO SAUCE."

THAT CHEF IS QUITE SKILLED, HUH.
OH, REALLY NOW!
.....
.....
WELL, IT'S A CARP DISH AFTER ALL...
CARP SOUP, HUH?
IT MIGHT NOT BE THE PERFECT MATCH FOR THIS SEASON, BUT I'LL MAKE SOME CARP SOUP AS WELL.
WELL, THIS DISH IS QUITE A TASTE SENSATION, ISN'T IT?
WELL, THAT'S JUST HOW IT IS, ISN'T IT...


PLEASE DON'T SAY THAT, JUST EAT IT.
IT SEEMS IT DIDN'T SUIT YOUR TASTE BUDS, SO HOW ABOUT TRYING THIS ONE - 'WASHIMI' AND 'KOI KOKUMADE'?
WHA-
NO, I'VE HAD PLENTY.
WELL, JUST ONE BITE.
OH, THIS, THIS AROMA, THIS TASTE, IT'S JUST LIKE THE GOOD OLD DAYS!
IS IT THE SAME, THEN?
IS THIS A DIFFERENT CARP?! IT'S INCOMPARABLE TO THE LAST ONE, IT'S SO DELICIOUS!!
NO, THIS IS THE OTHER HALF OF THE CARP FROM EARLIER.
WHAT DID YOU SAY!?
FOR THE FIRST 'WASHIMI' WITH VINEGAR MISO AND 'KOI KOKUMADE,' WE USED 'DAIMYOKA' COMPANY'S MISO, AND FOR THE NEXT ONE THAT YOU SAID WAS MUCH TASTIER, WE USED THE KIMIJIMA FAMILY'S MISO.
OH, IT'S THE MISO THAT'S DIFFERENT!
YOU GOT IT.

OH, OISHINBO VOLUME 5!




BY USING POOR INGREDIENTS AND RUSHING THE FERMENTATION PROCESS WITHIN A MONTH OR SO, THE TASTE DETERIORATES. EVEN THOUGH MISO SHOULD BE A PRESERVED FOOD, IT SPOILS QUICKLY.
THAT'S WHY DAIMYO-KA COMPANY ADDS VARIOUS CHEMICAL SEASONINGS AND SYNTHETIC PRESERVATIVES.
WILL WE BE ABLE TO TASTE THE NATURAL FLAVOR WITH THIS...?
IT'S UNAVOIDABLE TO CUT COSTS.
WELL, THE DIFFERENCE IN INGREDIENTS IS CRUCIAL. THE FOLKS AT DAIMYO-KA COMPANY USE LOWER QUALITY IMPORTED SOYBEANS MIXED WITH SOYBEAN HUSKS TO MAKE THEIR MISO.
EVEN IF THE RICE IS OLD, IT'S CRUCIAL TO DEVELOP THE TECHNIQUE TO MAKE GOOD KOJI. IGNORING THE COST ISSUE IS JUST NOT AN OPTION, RIGHT?
WHEN MAKING KOJI, THEY MUST BE USING CHEAP OLD RICE OR EVEN ANCIENT, SUPER-OLD RICE.
THERE'S NO OTHER WAY TO SELL A LOT OF IT.
BUT, BUT, IT'S APPROVED BY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, YOU KNOW!
IS THAT REALLY TRUE?
W-WHAT THE HECK, ARE WE BEING FED SUCH MISO!?
SUCH A THING CANNOT BE CALLED MISO...
POOR-QUALITY SOYBEANS, ANCIENT RICE, PRESERVATIVES, REMNANTS OF CHEMICAL SEASONINGS...
THERE ARE REMNANTS OF MISO LEFT BEHIND.
BUT IF YOU JUST BAKE IT LIKE EARLIER, ALL THAT PROCESSING GOES TO WASTE, AND THE CHEMICAL SEASONINGS GET DESTROYED.
THE ORIGINAL 'COUNTRY MISO'

I NOW CLEARLY RECOGNIZE THAT THE TECHNIQUE OF PRETENDING TO BE AUTHENTIC IS SOMETHING THAT DESTROYS CULTURE AND HEALTH. IT'S TIME TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS.
I WAS DECEIVED BY THE WORDS 'TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION.'
NO WAY.
MR. KIMIJIMA, I WAS TERRIBLY RUDE EARLIER. PLEASE FORGIVE ME.
GOVERNOR.
THANK YOU.
WITHOUT DELAY, I WILL PUT INTO EFFECT SPECIAL MEASURES TO PROTECT KIMIJIMA BREWING'S 'ORIGINAL COUNTRY MISO' UNDER MY GOVERNOR'S AUTHORITY. AS LONG AS YOU DON'T GIVE UP THE EFFORT TO PRESERVE THE AUTHENTIC TASTE, OUR PREFECTURE PLEDGES TO TREASURE 'ORIGINAL COUNTRY MISO' AS A GEM OF THE CITIZENS AND SPARE NO ASSISTANCE POSSIBLE.
ONCE YOU GET IT, GO AHEAD AND DIG IN! THERE ARE STILL PLENTY OF CARP LEFT, YOU KNOW!
ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE, NOW YOU KNOW WHAT THE REAL TASTE IS ALL ABOUT!

OH, COME ON, ENOUGH, ALREADY!
OH, NO, IT'S NOT LIKE THAT...
THANK YOU, MR. YAMAOKA! IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU!
WELL, WELL, LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT A BIT OF A COMPETITION ON OUR HANDS.
SAY, SAWAKO, YOU WORK IN TOKYO, RIGHT? YOU'VE GOT QUITE THE INTENSE VIBE TODAY.
HEY!!!
WHY ARE YOU DILLY-DALLYING? KEEP COOKING THOSE CARP DISHES!

第2話
青竹の香り

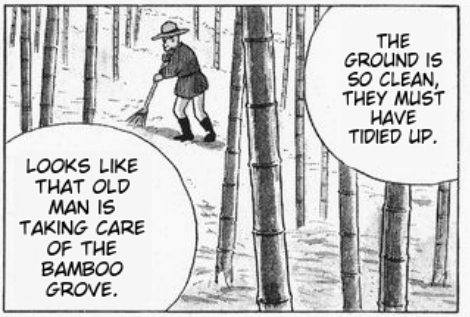
AT THE END OF AUGUST, I MANAGED TO SNEAK IN ONE LAST BREAK. WITH FEWER DAYS THIS TIME, I DECIDED TO USE THE COMPANY DORM IN KAMAKURA AS A BASE FOR ENJOYING SOME MOUNTAIN HIKES.

OH, BAMBOO GROVE!

YAMAOKA, STILL IN DEBT TO TABATA FROM LOSING AT HORSE RACING, WAS ONCE AGAIN PITIFULLY SUMMONED AS A SERVANT...

IT'S SO SPACIOUS HERE.
IT'S GOT A GOOD VIBE, HUH?

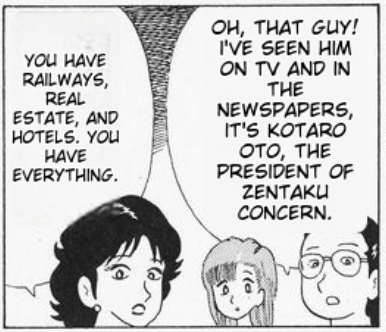
HEY, IT'S COOL AND FEELS NICE, WANNA HAVE OUR BENTO HERE?
AGREED!

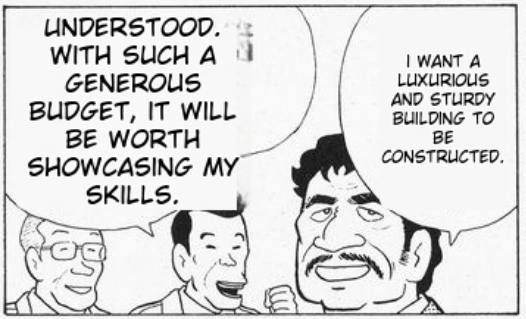

THE GROUND IS SO CLEAN, THEY MUST HAVE TIDIED UP.
LOOKS LIKE THAT OLD MAN IS TAKING CARE OF THE BAMBOO GROVE.

I'LL GO ASK THAT OLD MAN IF IT'S OKAY.
SHALL WE INVITE HIM TO JOIN US?

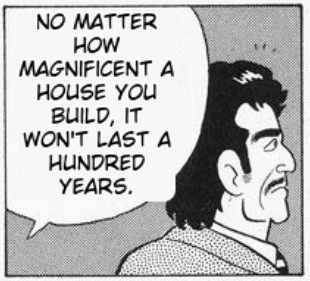
THIS IS REALLY GETTING OLD!
HE'S AGREED TO JOIN US!
GREAT! YOU THERE, SERVANT, START PREPARING RIGHT AWAY.
OH, THIS IS QUITE THE FEAST.
HERE YOU GO.
NOT TO BOAST, BUT THERE'S NO OTHER BAMBOO GROVE AS GRAND AS THIS.
SURPRISINGLY, THERE AREN'T MANY GOOD BAMBOO GROVES IN KAMAKURA.
THIS BAMBOO GROVE IS QUITE SPLENDID, ISN'T IT? IT MUST BE QUITE A TASK TO MAINTAIN.
IT FEELS LIKE THEY'RE CARING FOR IT WITH LOVE.
SORRY, BUT WE CAN'T SERVE BAMBOO SHOOTS...
NO, NEVER MIND. I FORGOT.
OH...
WELL, WELL! NEXT TIME, SWING BY IN SPRING, I'LL TREAT YOU TO A FEAST OF BAMBOO SHOOTS!
I BET WE'LL HAVE SOME GREAT BAMBOO SHOOTS IN SPRING.

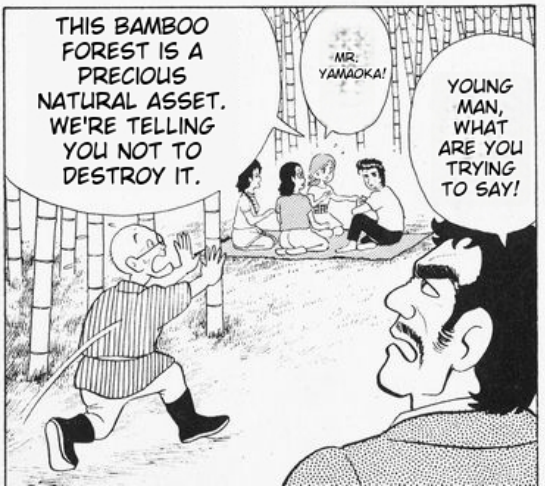
THE OWNER DECIDED TO DEMOLISH THIS BAMBOO GROVE AND BUILD A VILLA HERE...
NO WAY...
IT'S ALRIGHT, I'M SURE YOU HAVE YOUR REASONS AND PLANS.
OF COURSE, IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE GOING TO FEAST ON BAMBOO SHOOTS FOR NO REASON...
I'M THE CARETAKER OF THIS LAND, AND EVERYTHING HERE, INCLUDING THE BAMBOO GROVE, BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE.
WHAT A SHAME, TO DESTROY SUCH A FINE BAMBOO GROVE...
IT'S A WASTE, ONCE YOU CRUSH A BAMBOO GROVE, THERE'S NO TURNING BACK, YOU KNOW.
A VILLA?
OH, MR. PRESIDENT!


YOU HAVE RAILWAYS, REAL ESTATE, AND HOTELS. YOU HAVE EVERYTHING.
OH, THAT GUY! I'VE SEEN HIM ON TV AND IN THE NEWSPAPERS, IT'S KOTARO OTO, THE PRESIDENT OF ZENTAKU CONCERN.


UNDERSTOOD. WITH SUCH A GENEROUS BUDGET, IT WILL BE WORTH SHOWCASING MY SKILLS.
I WANT A LUXURIOUS AND STURDY BUILDING TO BE CONSTRUCTED.

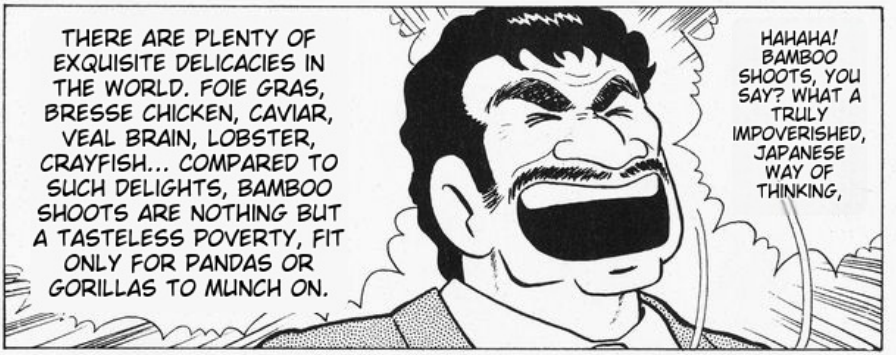
IF WE CUT THROUGH THIS BAMBOO FOREST, WITH THE MOUNTAINS TO THE NORTH AND THE SOUTHEAST WIDE OPEN, IT'S A PERFECT TERRAIN, SPANNING OVER 5,000 TSUBO.
I SEE, THIS WILL INDEED BE A GREAT LOCATION.

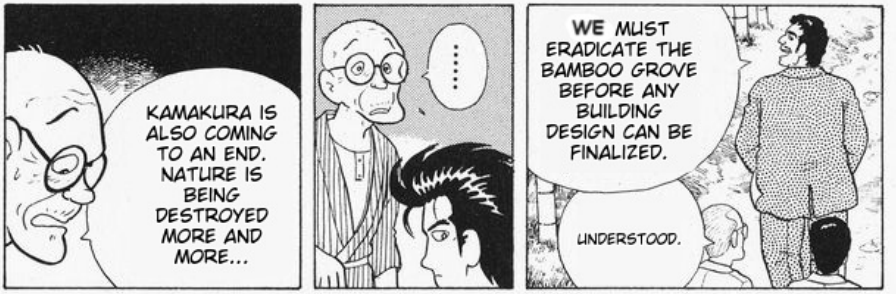

NO MATTER HOW MAGNIFICENT A HOUSE YOU BUILD, IT WON'T LAST A HUNDRED YEARS.


THIS BAMBOO FOREST IS A PRECIOUS NATURAL ASSET. WE'RE TELLING YOU NOT TO DESTROY IT.
MR. YAMAOKA!
YOUNG MAN, WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY!

IT'S A SHAME THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT MAINTAINING THIS SPLENDID BAMBOO FOREST IS THE TRUE LUXURY...

HEY, 'OISHINBO' VOLUME 5.





*ECREVISSE MEANS CRAYFISH.

THE CHEF WE'RE ABOUT TO MEET AT THIS RESTAURANT TRAINED IN LYON FOR FIVE WHOLE YEARS. TODAY, HE'S PREPARED A SPECIAL DISH JUST FOR YOU, MR. YAMAOKA.
WOW, I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT.
IT'S JUST A LITTLE TOKEN OF GRATITUDE FOR SAVING OUR HOMETOWN'S 'COUNTRY MISO' FROM A CRISIS.
Le Chat Noir
MR. YAMAOKA, HOW'S THE TASTE?
MMM, THE TERRINE WITH VEGETABLES IS LIGHT AND PERFECT.
WOW, I'M SO HAPPY!
SAWAKO, YOU'RE ALL OVER MR. YAMAOKA... WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU?
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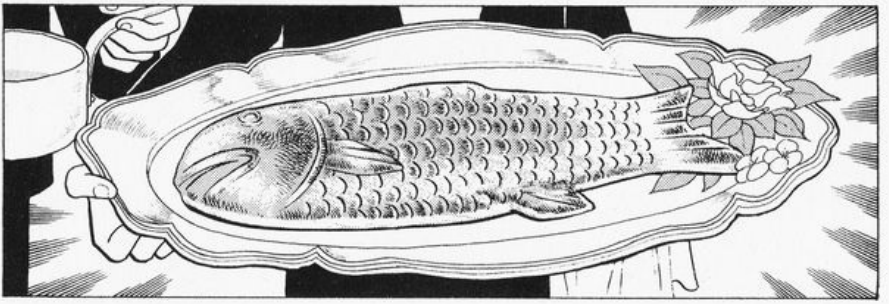

WOW, IT LOOKS AMAZING, SIMPLY STUNNING!
YOU SURE DO KNOW YOUR STUFF. IT'S THE CHEF'S PRIDE DISH HERE!
OH, A LYON-STYLE BAKED SEA BASS IN PIE CRUST, HUH!

WRAPPING IT IN PIE CRUST AND BAKING IT, WHAT A FANTASTIC IDEA!
SO DELICIOUS! THE COMBINATION OF PIE AND SEA BASS IS IRRESISTIBLE!

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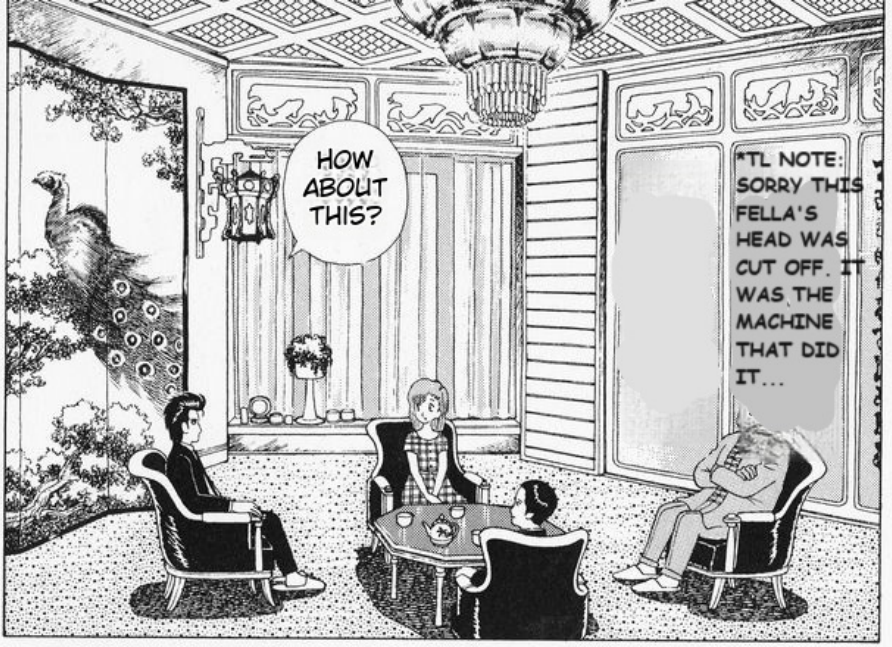
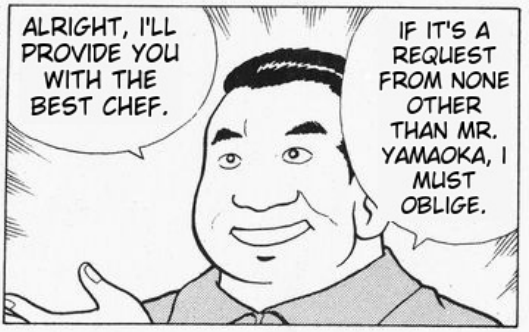
!

WHAT'S THIS URGENT MATTER?
I'M GOING TO YOKOHAMA TO MEET MR. SHU!!!
WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SAVE THE BAMBOO GROVE IN KAMAKURA.
MR. YAMAOKA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
...WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE PICKING OFF THE PIE CRUST AND SAUCE BEFORE EATING...
HUH!?
SORRY, SOMETHING URGENT CAME UP. I HAVE TO GO.
WAIT.
I'M GOING TOO!
WHAT'S THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THIS SUZUKI, THAT BAMBOO GROVE, AND EVERYTHING ELSE?
HUH?
COME ON, LET'S ENJOY THE GOOD STUFF JUST BETWEEN US.
JUST WAIT, LET'S JUST LEAVE THOSE GUYS ALONE.


HOW ABOUT THIS?
*TL NOTE: SORRY THIS FELLA'S HEAD WAS CUT OFF. IT WAS THE MACHINE THAT DID IT...

THANK YOU.


ALRIGHT, I'LL PROVIDE YOU WITH THE BEST CHEF.
IF IT'S A REQUEST FROM NONE OTHER THAN MR. YAMAOKA, I MUST OBLIGE.

HMM... IT'S QUITE A FALL FROM GRACE TO HAVE A LOWLY EMPLOYEE LIKE ME FILLING IN FOR THE COMPANY PRESIDENT...
YOU WOULDN'T EXTEND AN INVITATION TO SOMEONE LIKE ME, A NOBODY, RIGHT?

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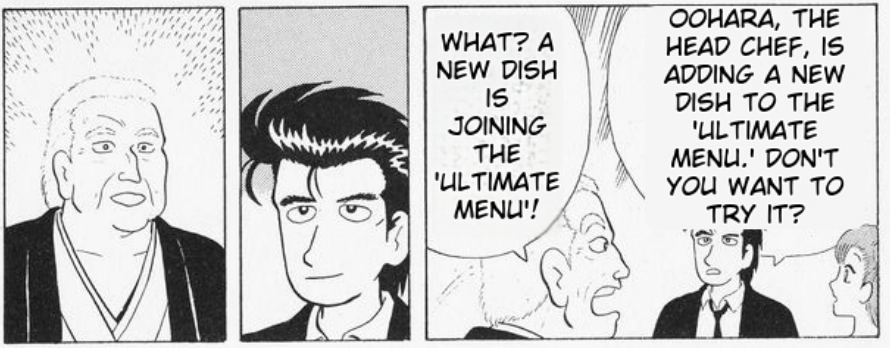
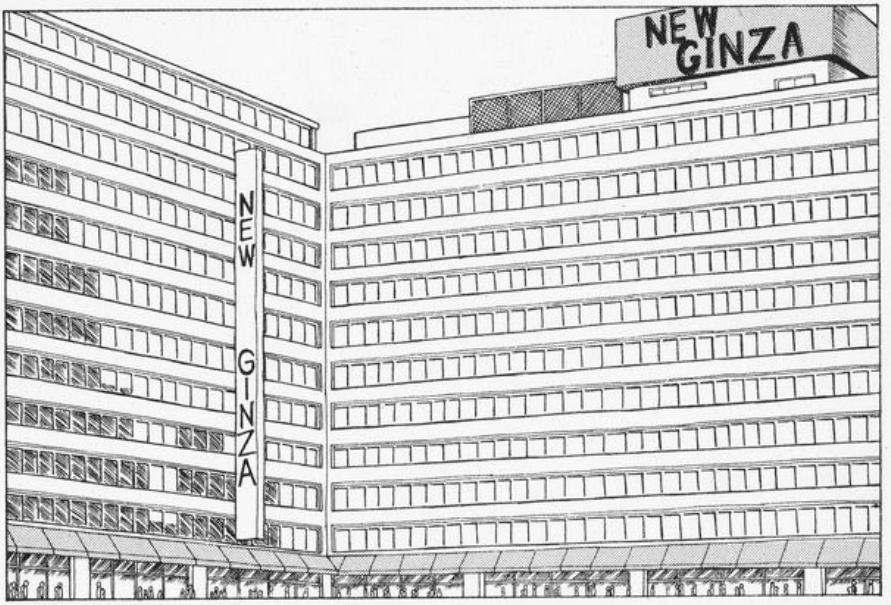
SO YOU WANT ME TO INVITE PRESIDENT OTO FROM ZENTAKU GROUP FOR A MEAL?


WHAT? A NEW DISH IS JOINING THE 'ULTIMATE MENU'!
OOHARA, THE HEAD CHEF, IS ADDING A NEW DISH TO THE 'ULTIMATE MENU.' DON'T YOU WANT TO TRY IT?


NEW GINZA
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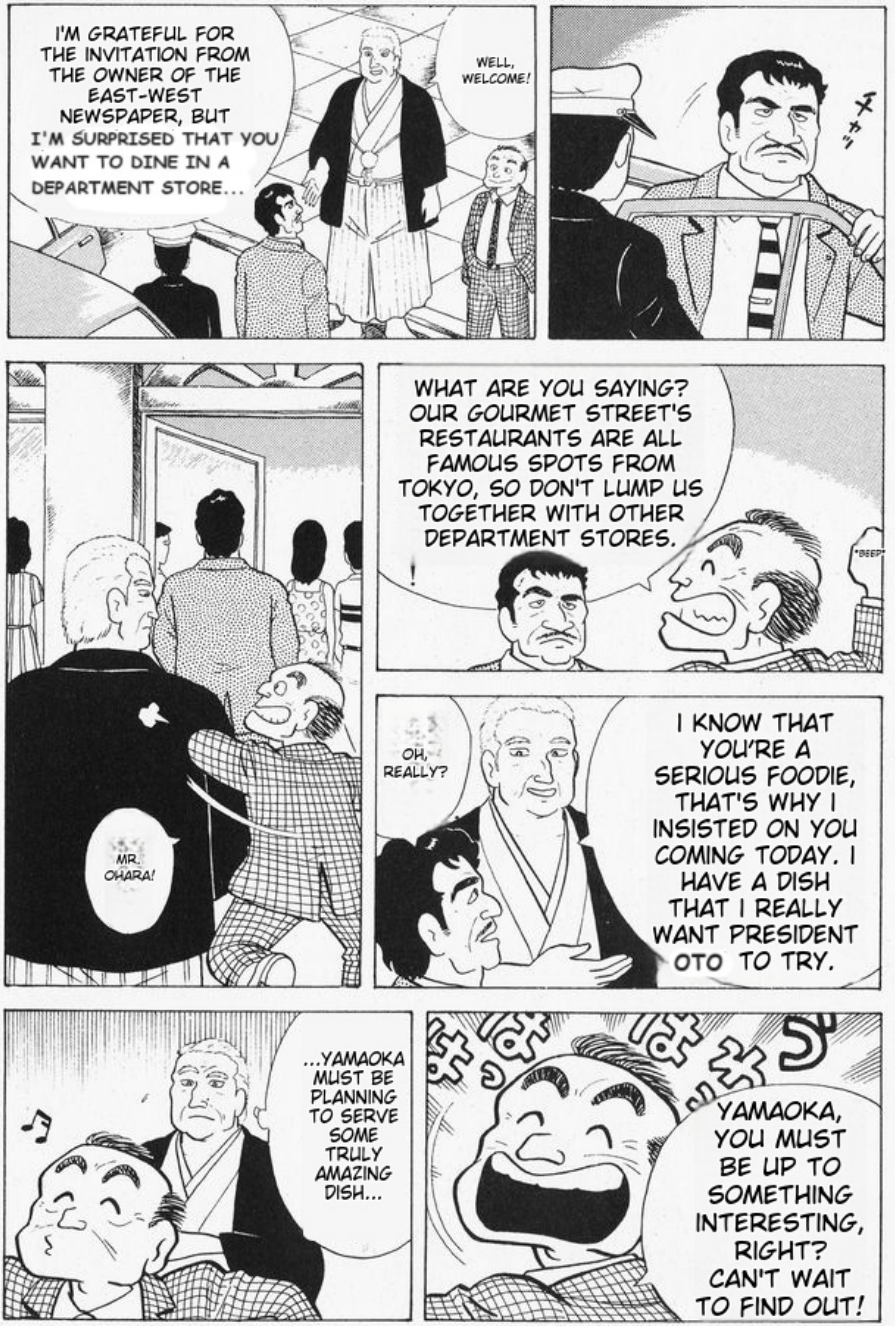
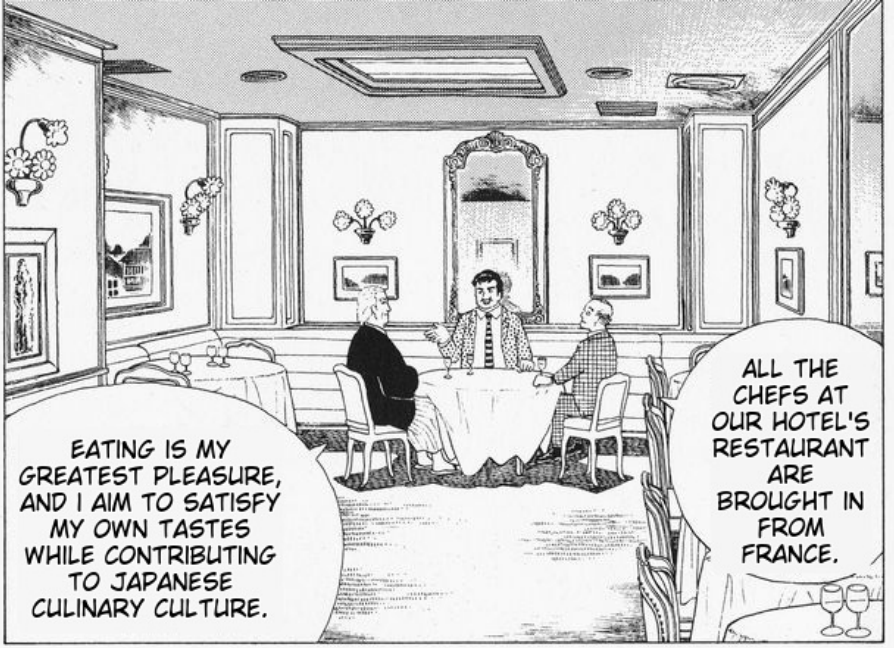
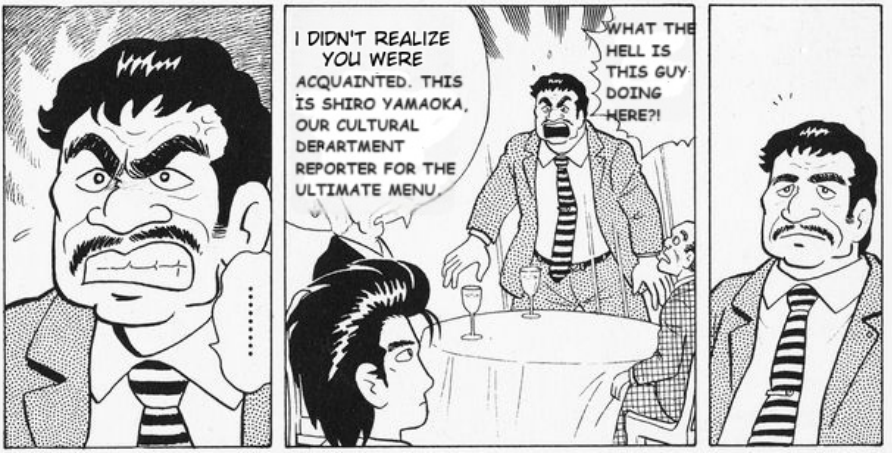
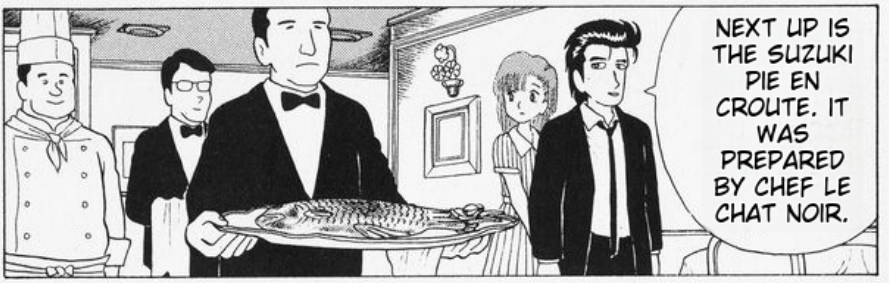

I'M GRATEFUL FOR THE INVITATION FROM THE OWNER OF THE EAST-WEST NEWSPAPER, BUT I'M SURPRISED THAT YOU WANT TO DINE IN A DEPARTMENT STORE...
WELL, WELCOME!
ムカ
MR. OHARA!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? OUR GOURMET STREET'S RESTAURANTS ARE ALL FAMOUS SPOTS FROM TOKYO, SO DON'T LUMP US TOGETHER WITH OTHER DEPARTMENT STORES.
!
"BEEP"
OH, REALLY?
I KNOW THAT YOU'RE A SERIOUS FOODIE, THAT'S WHY I INSISTED ON YOU COMING TODAY. I HAVE A DISH THAT I REALLY WANT PRESIDENT OTO TO TRY.
...YAMAOKA MUST BE PLANNING TO SERVE SOME TRULY AMAZING DISH...
YAMAOKA, YOU MUST BE UP TO SOMETHING INTERESTING, RIGHT? CAN'T WAIT TO FIND OUT!


EATING IS MY GREATEST PLEASURE, AND I AIM TO SATISFY MY OWN TASTES WHILE CONTRIBUTING TO JAPANESE CULINARY CULTURE.
ALL THE CHEFS AT OUR HOTEL'S RESTAURANT ARE BROUGHT IN FROM FRANCE.

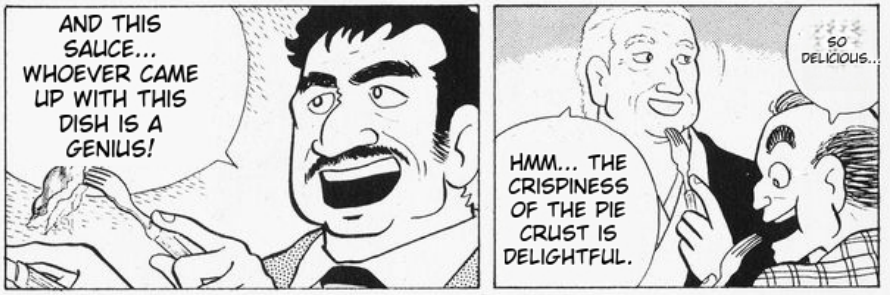
WOW, YOU REALLY KNOW YOUR FOOD!
IF I DON'T REFINE MY OWN PALATE, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THE RESTAURANT'S REPUTATION.
I GO OUT A FEW TIMES A YEAR AND INDULGE IN FOOD ADVENTURES.
SO, DO YOU ALSO VISIT FRANCE QUITE OFTEN?


.....
I DIDN'T REALIZE YOU WERE ACQUAINTED. THIS IS SHIRO YAMAOKA, OUR CULTURAL DEPARTMENT REPORTER FOR THE ULTIMATE MENU.
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS GUY DOING HERE?!

SO IT'S ALL SUZUKI?
OH, SUZUKI, YOU MEAN THE FISH SUZUKI? WOW, WHAT A CATCH!
TODAY, I THOUGHT WE COULD SPICE THINGS UP A BIT AND HAVE A BLAST WITH SOME DELIGHTFUL SUZUKI DISHES.
FIRST UP, WE HAVE THE SUZUKI'S HOKKORIYAKI. THE MAESTRO BEHIND THIS MASTERPIECE IS THE ONE AND ONLY OKAHOSHI FROM THE 'HOSHINO' CLAN.
OH, THIS SCENT...
I'M WRAPPING IT IN A LETTER AND STEAMING IT, SO THE FRAGRANCE WON'T ESCAPE, YOU SEE.
AH, THE WISDOM OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE...
PLEASE ENJOY IT WITH SOME PONZU SAUCE.
ARE YOU ALWAYS THIS MUCH OF A CHATTERBOX? I'M TRYING TO EAT HERE.
HMM.
IN THE KANTO REGION, THEY SAY THAT SUZUKI IS THE FISH OF SUMMER, BUT...
WELL, AROUND MATSUE, IT'S ALL ABOUT WINTER CUISINE, YOU KNOW!
DELICIOUS!

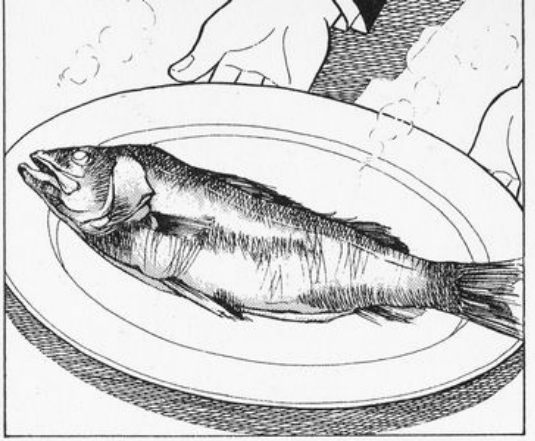

NEXT UP IS THE SUZUKI PIE EN CROUTE. IT WAS PREPARED BY CHEF LE CHAT NOIR.

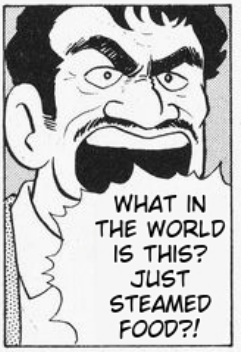
WOW! IT LOOKS AMAZING.
I ABSOLUTELY LOVE THIS! I THINK IT'S A MASTERPIECE AMONG FRENCH CUISINE!


AND THIS SAUCE... WHOEVER CAME UP WITH THIS DISH IS A GENIUS!
SO DELICIOUS...
HMM... THE CRISPINESS OF THE PIE CRUST IS DELIGHTFUL.

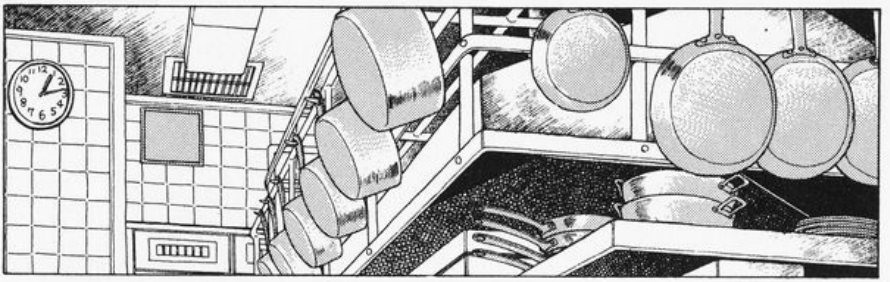
THIS IS THE SPECIAL DISH OF THE DAY.

OH, OISHINBO VOLUME 5!





THE RICHNESS OF SUZUKI IS PERFECTLY LOCKED WITHIN THE FLESH, COMPLEMENTED BY THIS MYSTERIOUS, FRESH, AND PURE AROMA...
MMM... WHAT AN INCREDIBLE TASTE!
IN THE CASE OF THE PIE-WRAPPED BAKE, SKIP THE PIE CRUST AND SAUCE...
BUT BEFORE THAT, PLEASE TASTE THE FLAVORS OF THE THREE KINDS OF SUZUKI ONCE AGAIN.
YAMAOKA, WHAT IS THIS!?
IS THIS REALLY SUZUKI AS BEFORE!?
THE LAST DISH YOU ALL SAVORED IS CALLED SUZUKI'S BAMBOO-GRILLED. IT'S CHINESE CUISINE...
UH, WELL... Y-YES, INDEED...
WELL, WHEN IT COMES TO THE TASTE OF SUZUKI ALONE, THE STEAMED BAKE MIGHT BE BETTER THAN THE PIE-WRAPPED BAKE...
AND THE FINAL STEAMED BAKE SURPASSES EVEN THAT...
PLEASE COME TO THE KITCHEN.
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THIS, WHAT KIND OF COOKING METHOD IS THIS!!
SUZUKI'S BAMBOO-GRILLED!?



SO, WHAT YOU JUST DID WAS...
I OWE A FAVOR TO MR. YAMAOKA, AND I JUST HAD TO REPAY IT WITH MY OWN SKILLS.
WELL THEN, LET ME EXPLAIN RIGHT AWAY.

WHEN I ASKED FOR A CHEF TODAY, MR. SHU HIMSELF ROLLED UP HIS SLEEVES AND STARTED COOKING...
THIS IS MR. SHU. HE'S THE CHAIRMAN OF THE YOKOHAMA OVERSEAS CHINESE ASSOCIATION AND RUNS A TRADING COMPANY.

FOR THE SEA BASS, GUT IT, SPRINKLE COARSE SALT, AND LIGHTLY DUST WITH WHOLE GRAINS OF SANSHO PEPPER...

FIRST, PREPARE SOME GREEN BAMBOO. LEAVE THE BOTTOM SECTION INTACT AND REMOVE ALL THE UPPER SECTIONS.

BY DOING SO, THE JUICE FROM THE FRESH BAMBOO SEEPS INTO THE BAMBOO, GIVING THE SEA BASS A DELIGHTFUL FRAGRANCE.
THEN, ROAST IT OVER THE FLAMES WHILE TURNING IT ROUND AND ROUND.
NEXT, WRAP IT IN PORK NET FAT.
PRESS IT DOWN TO THE BOTTOM OF THE BAMBOO TUBE...
AH, NET FAT...
JUST SAVORING THE AROMA OF FRESH BAMBOO, WHILE KEEPING THE SEA BASS'S FLAVOR LOCKED IN. THAT'S THE TRICK.
NORMALLY, THE UMAMI FLAVOR FROM THE STEAMED SEA BASS INSIDE THE BAMBOO TUBE WOULD ESCAPE, BUT THE NET FAT WRAPPED AROUND THE SEA BASS PREVENTS THAT FROM HAPPENING.
W-WHAT IN THE WORLD?!
WAS THAT AROMA THE SCENT OF FRESH BAMBOO?
AND THERE YOU HAVE IT.
TAKE YOUR TIME BAKING IT LIKE THIS UNTIL THE OUTSIDE IS BLACKENED AND CHARRED. THEN, SPLIT THE BAMBOO AND EXTRACT THE SEA BASS, PEELING OFF THE NET FAT.
WHAT A CUNNING TECHNIQUE!

WHEN IT COMES TO PARCHMENT-BAKED SUZUKI, THE FLAVOR OF THE SUZUKI DOESN'T GET ABSORBED BY THE PAPER, BUT ON THE FLIP SIDE, THE PAPER DOESN'T IMPART ANYTHING TO THE SUZUKI.
IN THE CASE OF SUZUKI FISH WRAPPED IN PIE CRUST, THE UMAMI OF THE SUZUKI IS SIGNIFICANTLY ABSORBED BY THE PIE CRUST. EVEN IF YOU EAT THEM TOGETHER, THE FLAVOR OF THE SUZUKI ITSELF DIMINISHES, CREATING A BIT OF A DILEMMA.
COULD IT BE THAT BAMBOO...
THIS FLAVOR IS TRULY FITTING TO BE SHOWCASED ON THE 'ULTIMATE MENU'!
IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE AROMA, YOU KNOW. THE SUZUKI ALSO ABSORBS THE ESSENCE OF BAMBOO SEEPING FROM THE GREEN BAMBOO.
.....
WHAT A MAGNIFICENT BAMBOO FOREST. THOUGH GREEN BAMBOO GRILLING IS GREAT, I ALWAYS STRUGGLE TO FIND THE PERFECT BAMBOO.
I APOLOGIZE FOR TAKING IT WITHOUT PERMISSION.
THANK YOU FOR THE FEAST. WITH THAT, I SHALL TAKE MY LEAVE...

PHEW, I'M RELIEVED!
THE PRESIDENT ASKED ME TO TAKE CARE OF THIS BAMBOO GROVE FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE...
INDEED. YOU KNOW, CHINESE CUISINE NEVER CEASES TO AMAZE ME.
ARE YOU ENJOYING YOURSELF MR. SHU?

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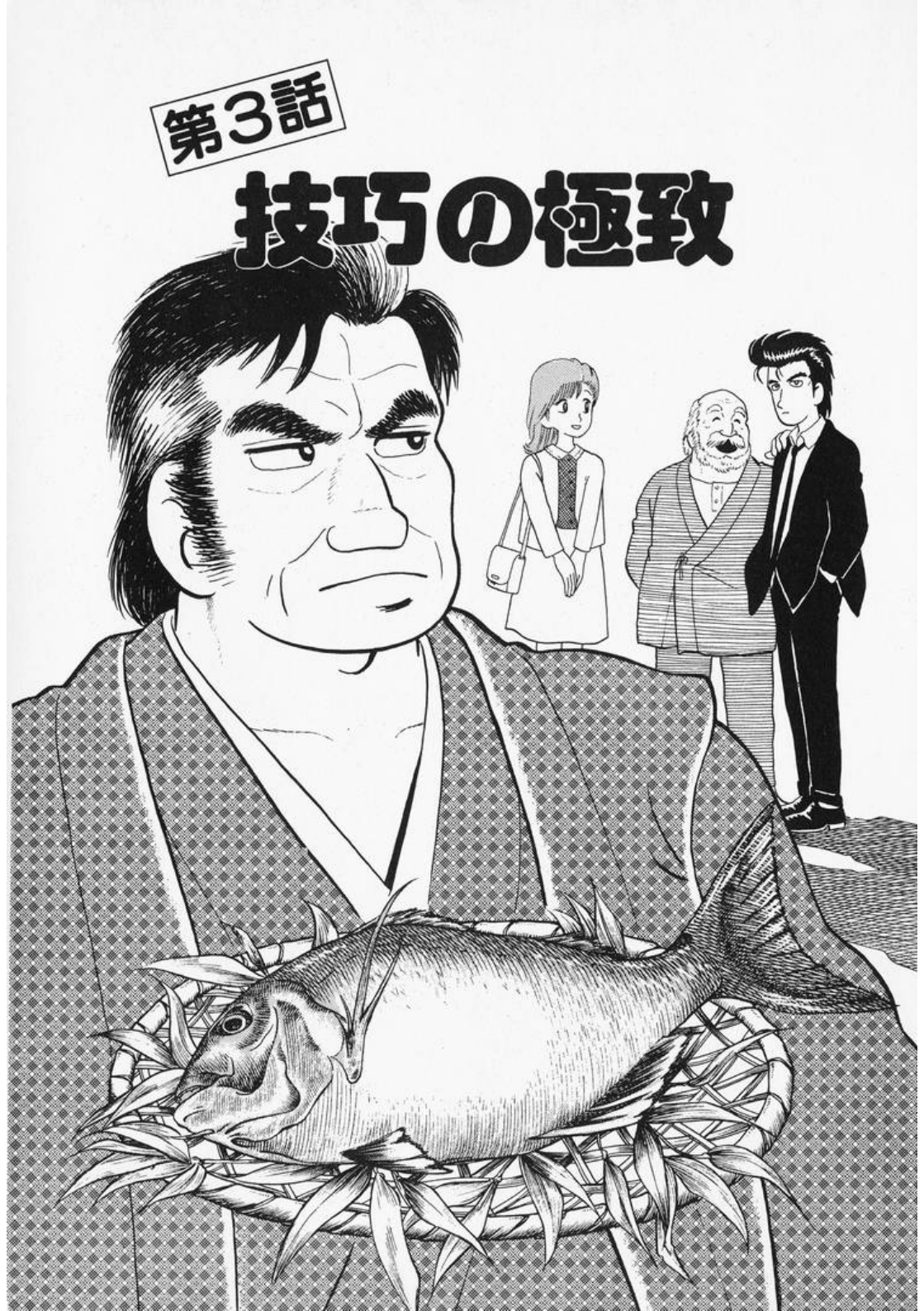

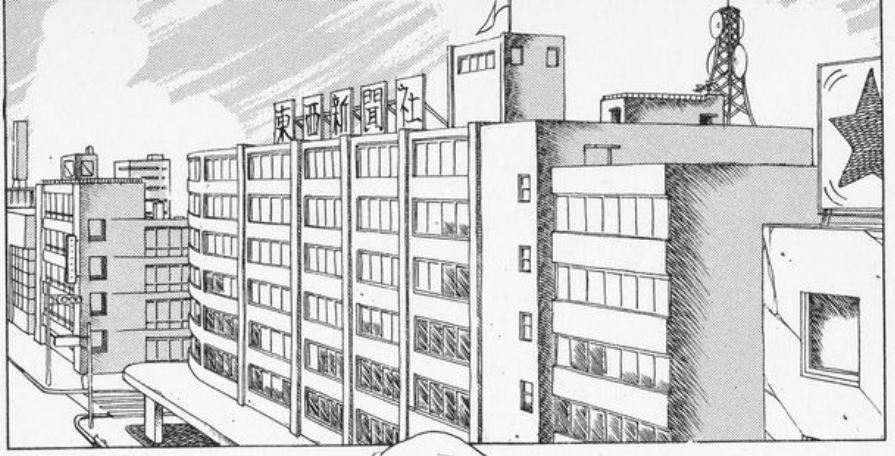
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GOOD DAY.

THE LIVING NATIONAL TREASURE, MASTER OF POTTERY, PROFESSOR TOYAMA!!!
OH, IT'S HIM!

OH, PROFESSOR TOYAMA!

WELCOME, IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE WE'VE MET.
AH, MS. KURITA! YOU ARE LOOKING AS RADIANT AS WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU.

IS SHIRO HERE?
UM...OVER THERE...
KURITA, DO YOU KNOW MASTER TOJIN?
OUCH.
HEY, WAKE UP!!
ボカッ
HE'S SUCH A HOPELESS CASE...
GEEZ, YOU'RE SUCH A BABY.
EVEN STILL, IT DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO COME TO MY JOB AND ABUSE ME...
SO, KAIBARA YUZAN WAS YOUR STUDENT?
I WANT TO GIVE YOU THIS...
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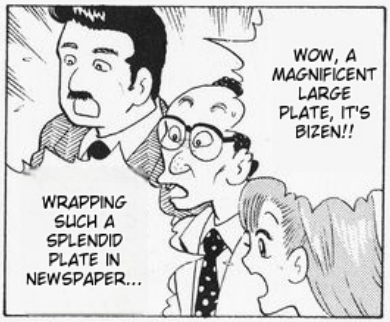
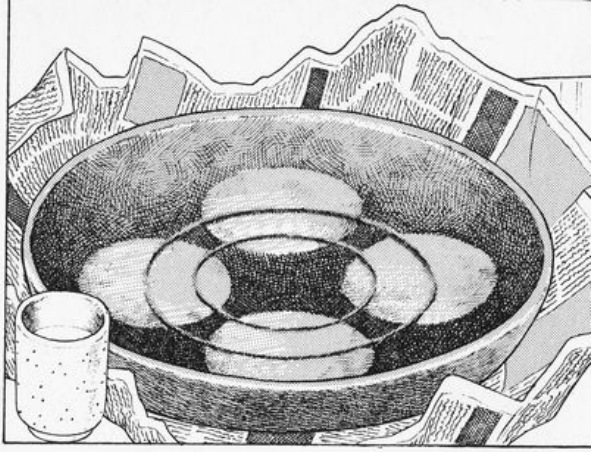
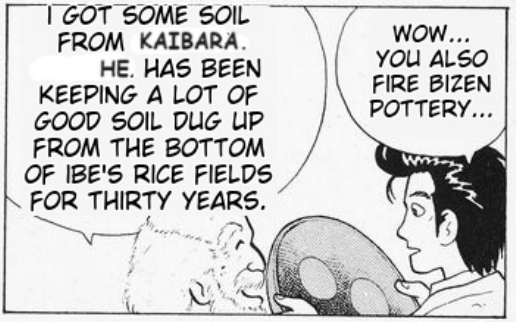
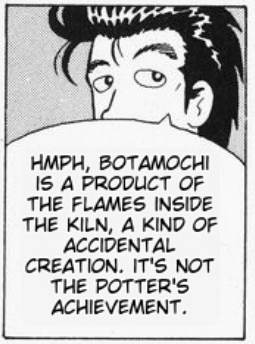
THANKS TO THAT CONNECTION, SHIRO HAS BEEN COMING IN AND OUT OF MY PLACE SINCE HE WAS A KID. TO ME, HE'S LIKE A GRANDSON, YOU SEE.


WOW, A MAGNIFICENT LARGE PLATE, IT'S BIZEN!!
WRAPPING SUCH A SPLENDID PLATE IN NEWSPAPER...

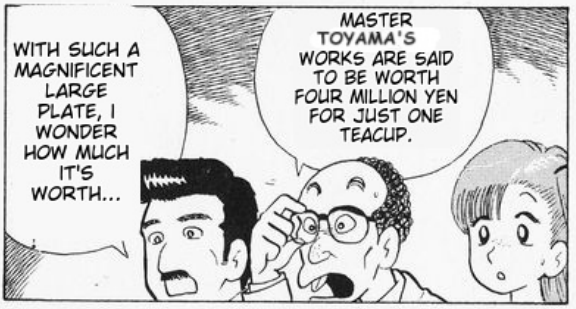


I'VE CHANGED MY MIND! I'M NOT GIVING THAT TO YOU! GIVE IT BACK!
YOU FOOL!! YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT POTTERY.
HOLD ON, ONCE I'VE RECEIVED SOMETHING, I DON'T GIVE IT BACK!


I GOT SOME SOIL FROM KAIBARA. HE HAS BEEN KEEPING A LOT OF GOOD SOIL DUG UP FROM THE BOTTOM OF IBE'S RICE FIELDS FOR THIRTY YEARS.
WOW... YOU ALSO FIRE BIZEN POTTERY...

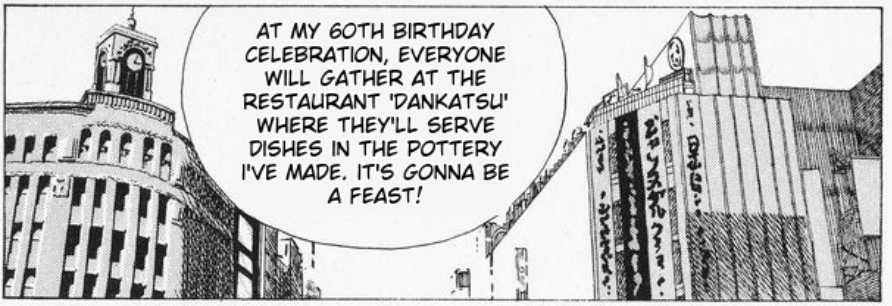

HMPH, BOTAMOCHI IS A PRODUCT OF THE FLAMES INSIDE THE KILN, A KIND OF ACCIDENTAL CREATION. IT'S NOT THE POTTER'S ACHIEVEMENT.

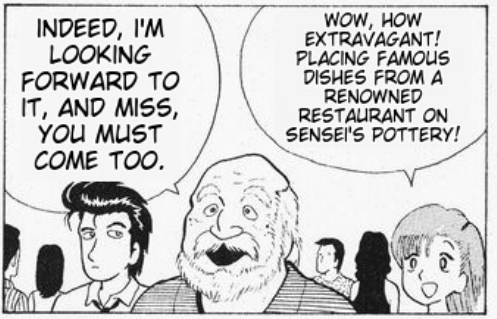
IT'S WELL DONE, AND THE BOTAMOCHI IS ALSO SPLENDID...
OF COURSE, I'M A LIVING NATIONAL TREASURE, YOU KNOW!

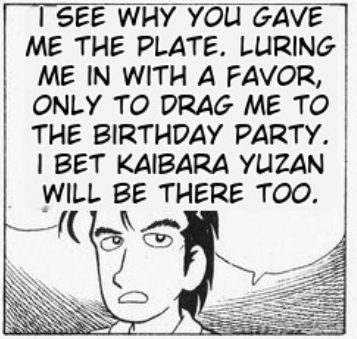

WITH SUCH A MAGNIFICENT LARGE PLATE, I WONDER HOW MUCH IT'S WORTH...
MASTER TOYAMA'S WORKS ARE SAID TO BE WORTH FOUR MILLION YEN FOR JUST ONE TEACUP.

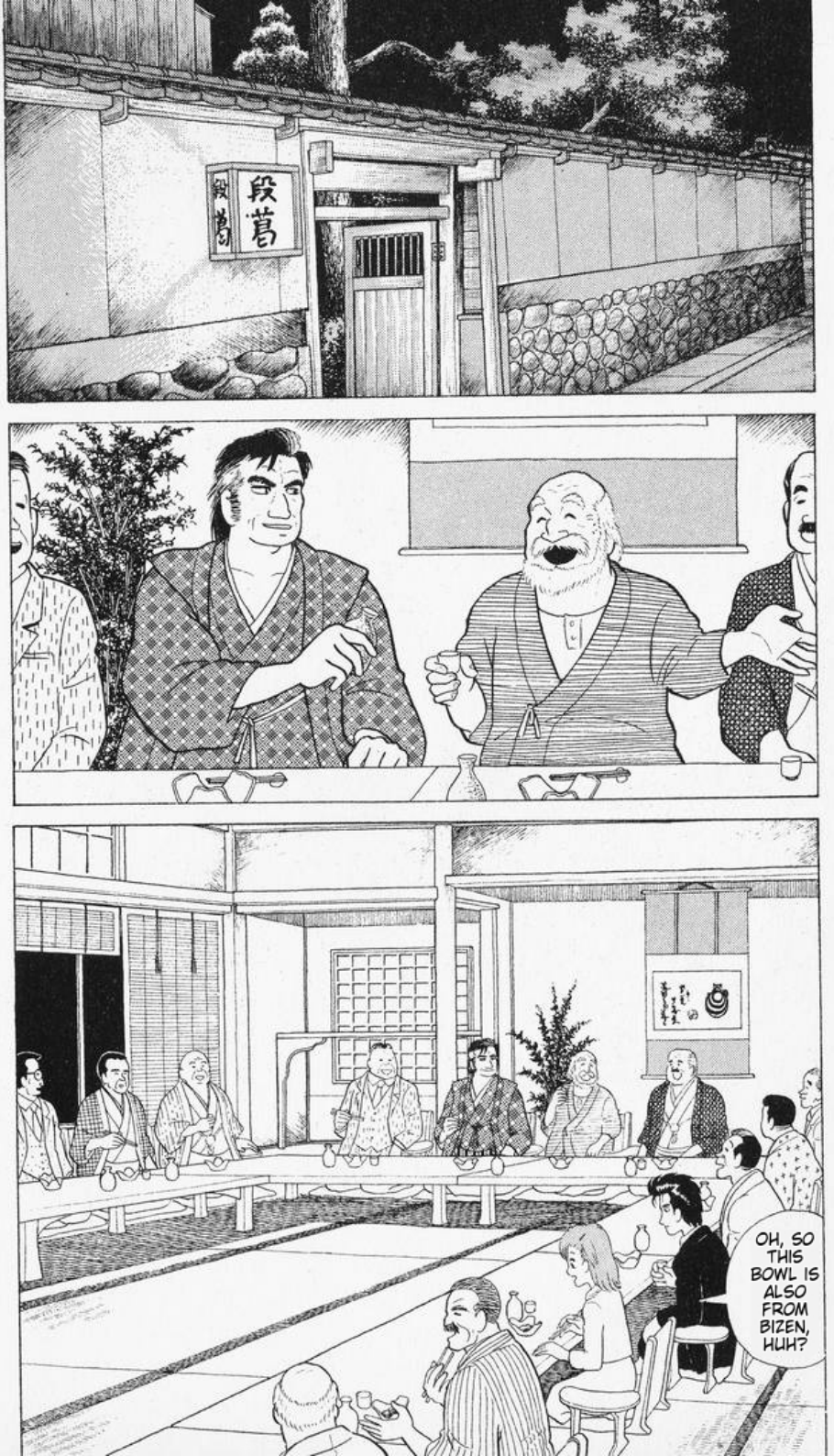
THIS GUY, I TELL YOU...

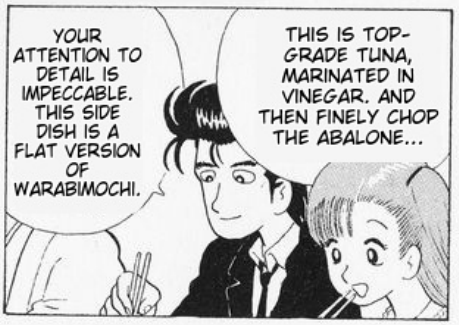
OH, IT'S 'OISHINBO 5'!

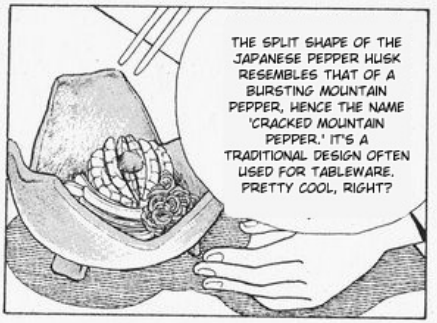







段葛
OH, SO THIS BOWL IS ALSO FROM BIZEN, HUH?


YOUR ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS IMPECCABLE. THIS SIDE DISH IS A FLAT VERSION OF WARABIMOCHI.
THIS IS TOP-GRADE TUNA, MARINATED IN VINEGAR. AND THEN FINELY CHOP THE ABALONE...


THE SPLIT SHAPE OF THE JAPANESE PEPPER HUSK RESEMBLES THAT OF A BURSTING MOUNTAIN PEPPER, HENCE THE NAME 'CRACKED MOUNTAIN PEPPER.' IT'S A TRADITIONAL DESIGN OFTEN USED FOR TABLEWARE. PRETTY COOL, RIGHT?

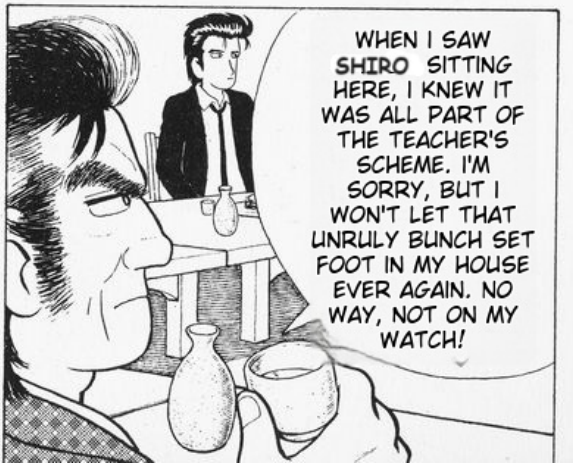
AND THEN, I MUST SAY, THIS DISH DOESN'T QUITE ELEVATE THE VESSEL IT'S SERVED IN.
AS YOU RIGHTLY SAID, A VESSEL IS LIKE A LIVING BEING! TREAT IT WELL, SERVE UP DELICIOUS DISHES, AND WATCH AS IT BLOSSOMS INTO SOMETHING EVEN MORE SPLENDID!

WHEN IT WAS FRESHLY COATED WITH SILVER, IT SHONE SO BRIGHTLY IT WAS DOWNRIGHT TACKY, BUT AS THE SILVER RUSTED AND DARKENED, IT BECAME INCREDIBLY SOPHISTICATED AND GAINED A NICE, MATURED CHARM.
GOODNESS GRACIOUS, THIS SILVER-PLATED PLATE IS SIMPLY DIVINE, ISN'T IT?
HEH HEH, YA SEE, VESSELS ARE JUST LIKE FOLKS, THEY GOTTA GROW UP TOO, YA KNOW!

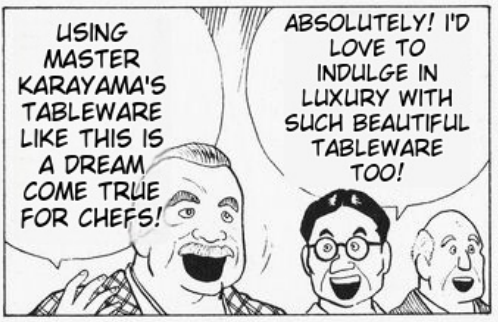
AT LEAST YOU AND SHIRO AREN'T MAKING A SCENE...

YOU'RE STILL AS TOUGH AS EVER, HUH?

GOODNESS GRACIOUS, BOTH PARENT AND CHILD ARE AS STUBBORN AS CAN BE...

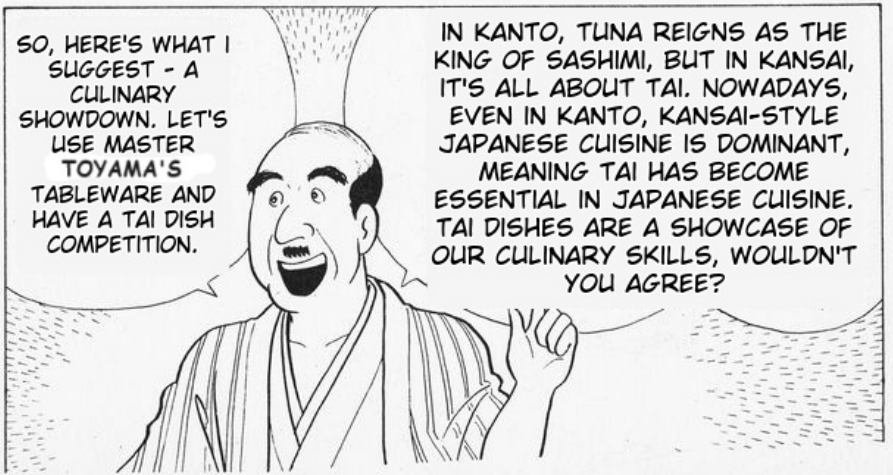

WHEN I SAW SHIRO SITTING HERE, I KNEW IT WAS ALL PART OF THE TEACHER'S SCHEME. I'M SORRY, BUT I WON'T LET THAT UNRULY BUNCH SET FOOT IN MY HOUSE EVER AGAIN. NO WAY, NOT ON MY WATCH!

WELL, WELL, LOOKS LIKE WE SHOULD PAY A VISIT TO 'SHIROGANE,' HUH?
SO, I HAVE A LITTLE PROPOSAL IN MIND FOR ALL OF YOU LOVELY FOLKS TO JOIN IN...
TODAY, WE WERE TRULY BLESSED TO SAVOR SUCH EXQUISITE DISHES ON MASTER TOYAMA CRAFTED TABLEWARE. IT WAS A FEAST FOR THE EYES AND THE TASTE BUDS.

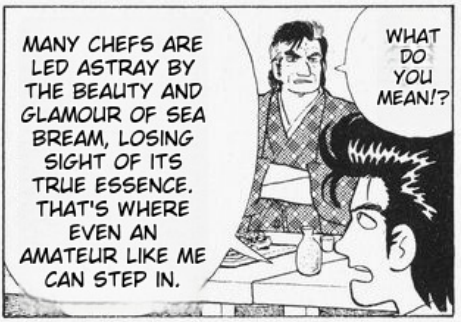

USING MASTER KARAYAMA'S TABLEWARE LIKE THIS IS A DREAM COME TRUE FOR CHEFS!
ABSOLUTELY! I'D LOVE TO INDULGE IN LUXURY WITH SUCH BEAUTIFUL TABLEWARE TOO!

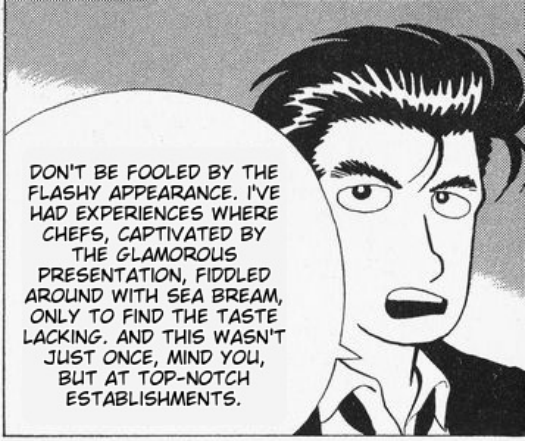
AMONG THE DELIGHTFUL GUESTS GATHERED HERE TODAY, THERE ARE SEVERAL RESTAURANT OWNERS LIKE US.
TODAY, WE FEASTED ON THE DISHES FROM 'DANGAKU' HERE, BUT I DON'T THINK I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO WANTS TO TRY PLATING DISHES ON MASTER TOYAMA'S FINE TABLEWARE.

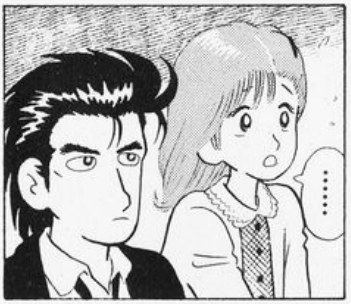
I ACTUALLY JUST GOT OFF THE PHONE NEGOTIATING WITH A FISHMONGER IN AKASHI. THEY PROMISED TO SEND US THE FINEST TAI FROM AKASHI, AS LONG AS WE HAVE SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES...


SO, HERE'S WHAT I SUGGEST - A CULINARY SHOWDOWN. LET'S USE MASTER TOYAMA'S TABLEWARE AND HAVE A TAI DISH COMPETITION.
IN KANTO, TUNA REIGNS AS THE KING OF SASHIMI, BUT IN KANSAI, IT'S ALL ABOUT TAI. NOWADAYS, EVEN IN KANTO, KANSAI-STYLE JAPANESE CUISINE IS DOMINANT, MEANING TAI HAS BECOME ESSENTIAL IN JAPANESE CUISINE. TAI DISHES ARE A SHOWCASE OF OUR CULINARY SKILLS, WOULDN'T YOU AGREE?

OH, IT'S 'OISHINBO 5'!
WHO WOULDN'T BE ON BOARD WITH THIS? I'M ALL IN! IT'S A BLESSING. BRING IT ON!
FOR PROFESSOR TOJIN'S 60TH BIRTHDAY ENTERTAINMENT, THIS IS JUST PERFECT. WHAT DO YOU SAY, PROFESSOR?
THIS IS GONNA BE FUN! A TAI FISH COOKING COMPETITION FOR A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION, CAN'T GET ANY BETTER THAN THAT.
WOW, I'M GETTING EXCITED! I WONDER WHAT KIND OF DISH WILL BE SERVED?
THIS WILL BE A SPECTACLE, A SHOWDOWN OF TOP-NOTCH CHEFS FROM TOKYO.
WELL, THIS IS QUITE INTRIGUING.
HOW ABOUT IT, PROFESSOR KAIBARA?
HAHAHA, AMATEURS CAN'T JUST WHIP UP A DISH WITH TAI FISH LIKE THAT.
AH, TAI FISH DISHES, HUH?
SHIRO, WHY DON'T YOU JOIN IN TOO? KNOWING YOU, YOU MUST HAVE SOME GREAT IDEAS, RIGHT?
THAT'S WHY DISCUSSIONS ABOUT TAI FISH COOK-OFFS ARISE, BUT IT'S NOT SOMETHING AMATEURS CAN MEDDLE IN.
THROUGHOUT HISTORY, TAI FISH HAS BEEN MASTERED BY SKILLED CHEFS WHO HAVE PASSED DOWN THEIR TECHNIQUES, CREATING VARIOUS HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED TAI FISH DISHES.


MANY CHEFS ARE LED ASTRAY BY THE BEAUTY AND GLAMOUR OF SEA BREAM, LOSING SIGHT OF ITS TRUE ESSENCE. THAT'S WHERE EVEN AN AMATEUR LIKE ME CAN STEP IN.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN!?


DON'T BE FOOLED BY THE FLASHY APPEARANCE. I'VE HAD EXPERIENCES WHERE CHEFS, CAPTIVATED BY THE GLAMOROUS PRESENTATION, FIDDLED AROUND WITH SEA BREAM, ONLY TO FIND THE TASTE LACKING. AND THIS WASN'T JUST ONCE, MIND YOU, BUT AT TOP-NOTCH ESTABLISHMENTS.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SHOULDN'T YOU BE FOCUSING ON THE COOKING!?
ARE YOU IMPLYING THAT WE DON'T KNOW THE DELICIOUSNESS OF SEA BREAM!?

NO, NO. IT'S MY FAULT. I SHOULDN'T HAVE INSTIGATED SHIRO LIKE THAT, SO I'LL APOLOGIZE ON HIS BEHALF...
WELL, WELL, I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, PROFESSOR TOYAMA. IT'S JUST THAT I COULDN'T LET THAT SLIDE...

NOW, NOW, CAN'T BE HELPED. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, START A QUARREL AND LEAVE YOUR HONORED GUEST HANGING?

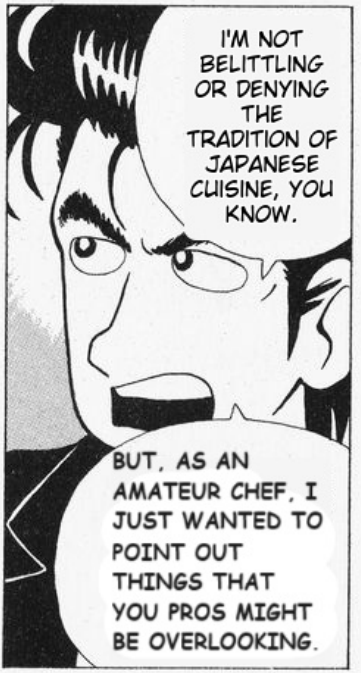
BUT I'LL ONLY APOLOGIZE AFTER YOU'VE TASTED MY AMATEUR COOKING.

HAHA, THAT'S THE SPIRIT! QUITE ADMIRABLE OF YOU TO WILLINGLY APOLOGIZE.
WELL, SHIROU, ENOUGH FOR NOW.

NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE TO PROFESSOR TOYAMA. IF ANYONE SHOULD APOLOGIZE, IT'S ME.

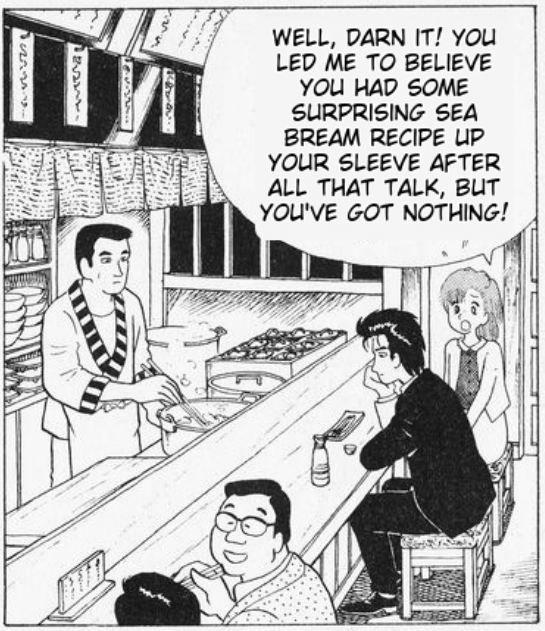
OH, GIVE ME A BREAK. THERE'S NOTHING A MERE AMATEUR LIKE YOU CAN DO NOW.
WELL, WELL...
WHAT... ARE YOU IMPLYING THAT IT'S ONLY AMATEURS LIKE YOU WHO ARE DARING ENOUGH TO CHALLENGE IT?

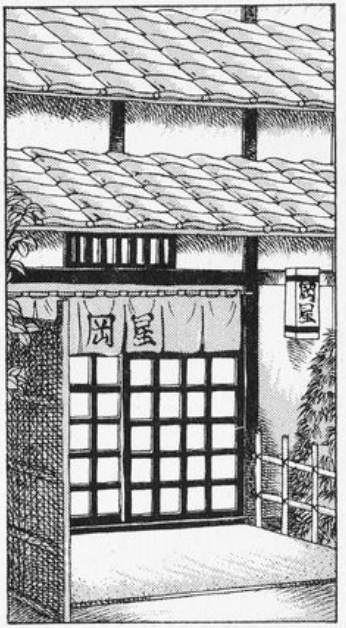
HOW CLUELESS CAN YOU BE!


I'M NOT BELITTLING OR DENYING THE TRADITION OF JAPANESE CUISINE, YOU KNOW.
BUT, AS AN AMATEUR CHEF, I JUST WANTED TO POINT OUT THINGS THAT YOU PROS MIGHT BE OVERLOOKING.

Y-YES...!
OH, I SEE, I SEE. IT'S ALL JUST A FUN LITTLE SIDESHOW FOR MY 60TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION. THERE'S NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN PROS AND AMATEURS IN A FESTIVAL LIKE THIS. IF SOMEONE WANTS TO DO IT, LET THEM. THAT SETTLES IT, RIGHT?

ALRIGHT, IT'S ON! A CHALLENGE OF SEA BREAM DISHES, HUH? LET'S PICK A DATE QUICKLY. LET'S MAKE IT GRAND!


WELL, DARN IT! YOU LED ME TO BELIEVE YOU HAD SOME SURPRISING SEA BREAM RECIPE UP YOUR SLEEVE AFTER ALL THAT TALK, BUT YOU'VE GOT NOTHING!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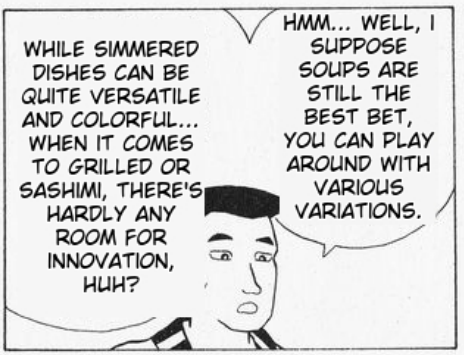
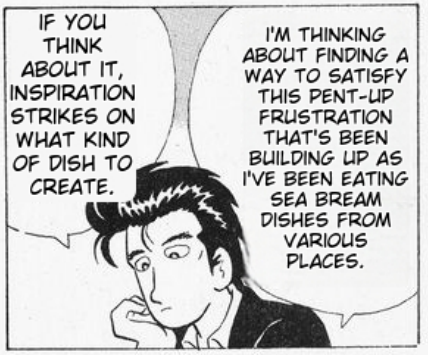
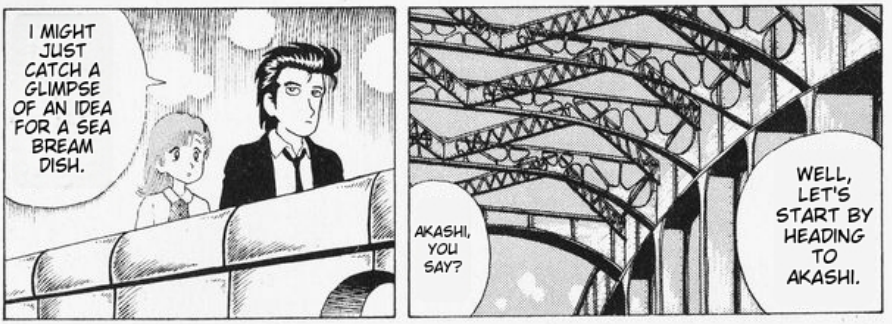
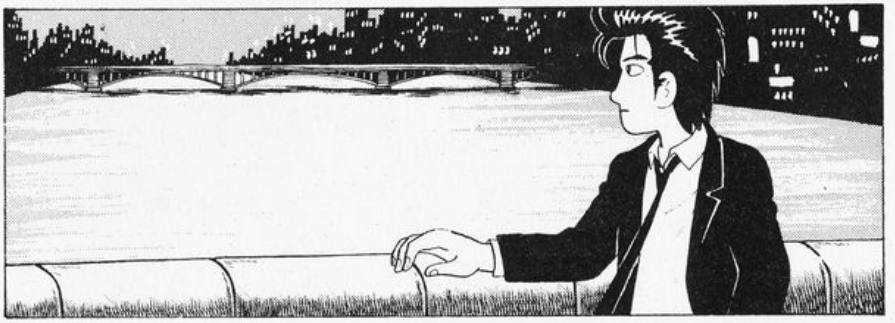

HMM... WELL, I SUPPOSE SOUPS ARE STILL THE BEST BET, YOU CAN PLAY AROUND WITH VARIOUS VARIATIONS.
WHILE SIMMERED DISHES CAN BE QUITE VERSATILE AND COLORFUL... WHEN IT COMES TO GRILLED OR SASHIMI, THERE'S HARDLY ANY ROOM FOR INNOVATION, HUH?

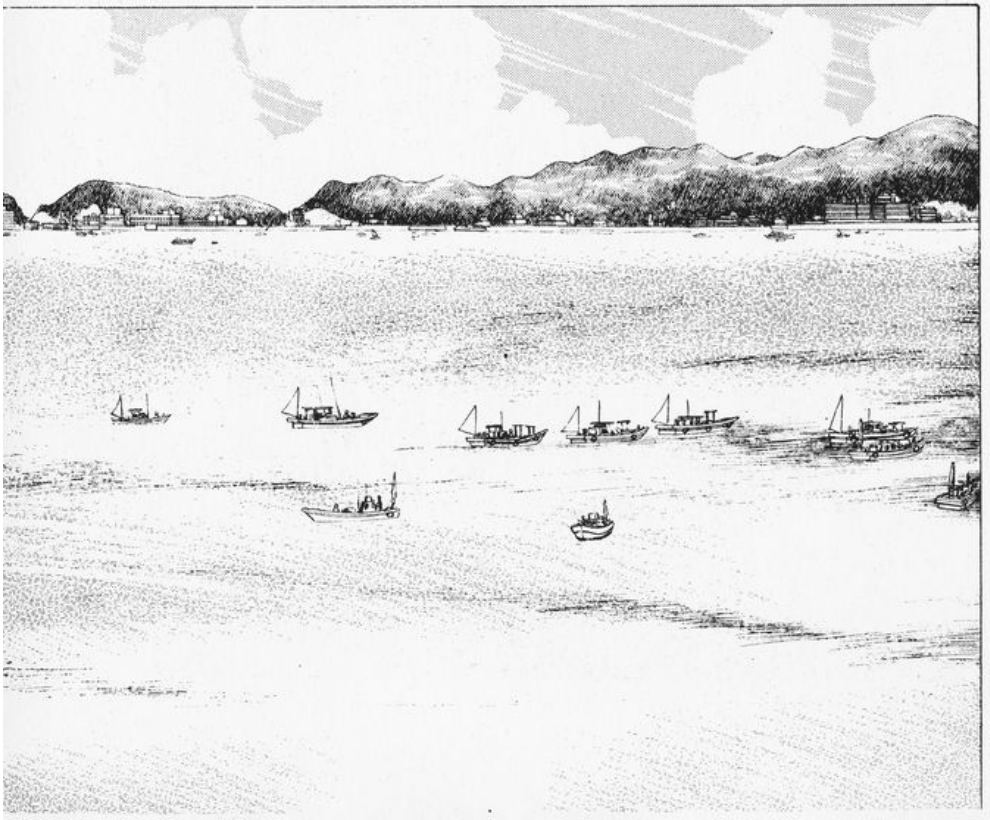

I'M THINKING ABOUT FINDING A WAY TO SATISFY THIS PENT-UP FRUSTRATION THAT'S BEEN BUILDING UP AS I'VE BEEN EATING SEA BREAM DISHES FROM VARIOUS PLACES.
IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, INSPIRATION STRIKES ON WHAT KIND OF DISH TO CREATE.

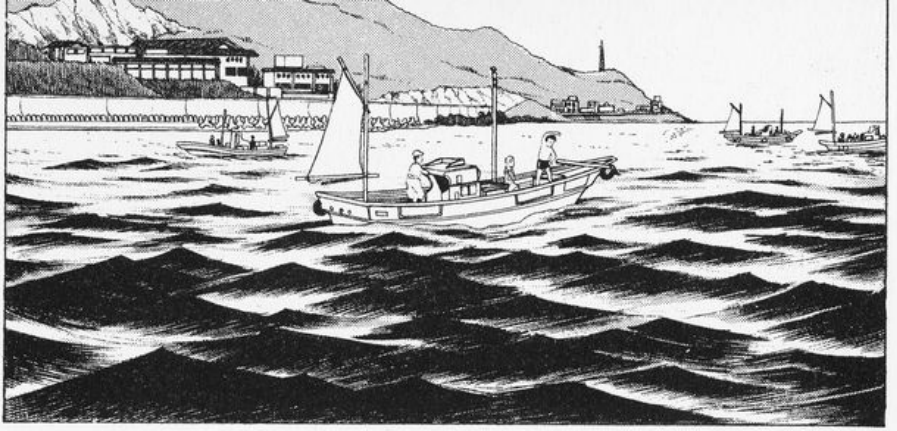
IT SEEMS SEA BREAM DISHES HAVE BEEN THOROUGHLY RESEARCHED, HUH? IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR AN AMATEUR LIKE ME TO COME UP WITH A NEW DISH NOW, ISN'T IT...!

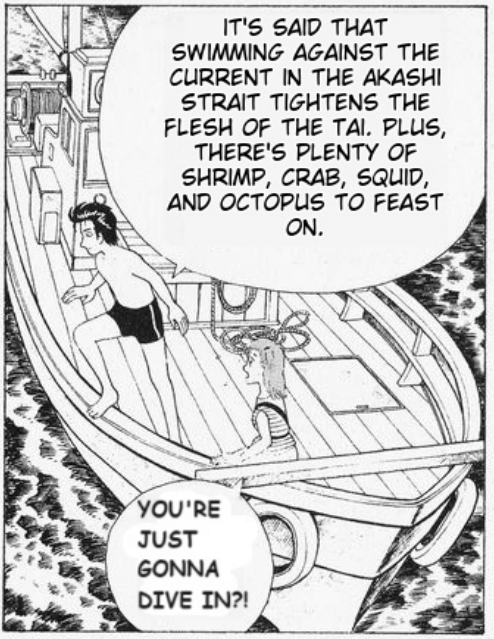
HEY, 'OISHINBO'
VOLUME 5.



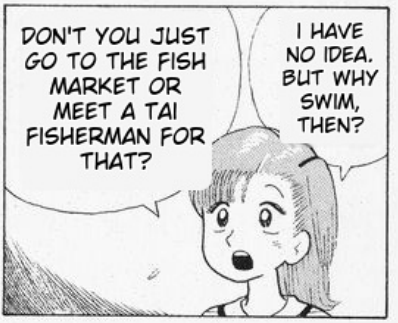







IT'S SAID THAT SWIMMING AGAINST THE CURRENT IN THE AKASHI STRAIT TIGHTENS THE FLESH OF THE TAI. PLUS, THERE'S PLENTY OF SHRIMP, CRAB, SQUID, AND OCTOPUS TO FEAST ON.
YOU'RE JUST GONNA DIVE IN?!

DO YOU KNOW WHY AKASHI STRAIT'S TAI IS SO DELICIOUS?


I HAVE NO IDEA. BUT WHY SWIM, THEN?
DON'T YOU JUST GO TO THE FISH MARKET OR MEET A TAI FISHERMAN FOR THAT?

AH, WHAT A SIMPLE-MINDED NOTION! THAT'S WHY YOU KEEP LOSING IN HORSE RACING!
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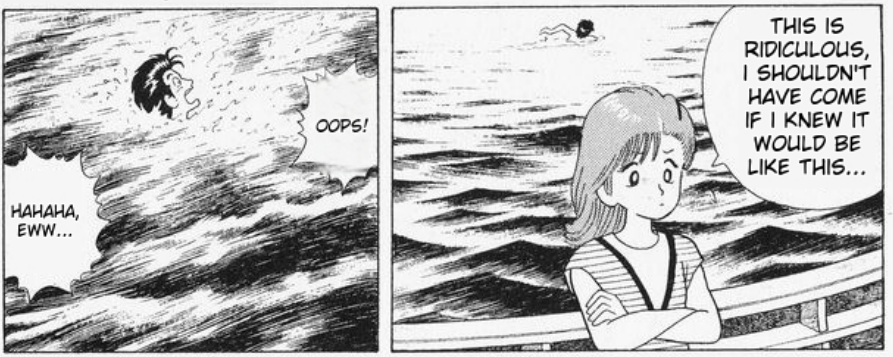
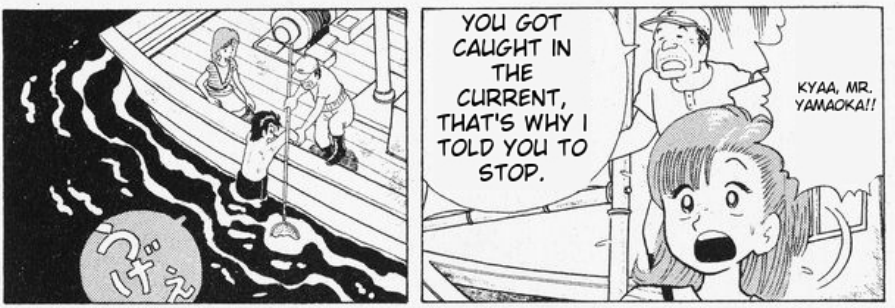
TO SAVOR THE TAI FISH OF AKASHI, ONE MUST TRULY UNDERSTAND THEM. DON'T YOU THINK SWIMMING ALONGSIDE THE TAI IS THE BEST WAY TO ACHIEVE THAT?


OOPS!
HAHAHA, EWW...
THIS IS RIDICULOUS, I SHOULDN'T HAVE COME IF I KNEW IT WOULD BE LIKE THIS...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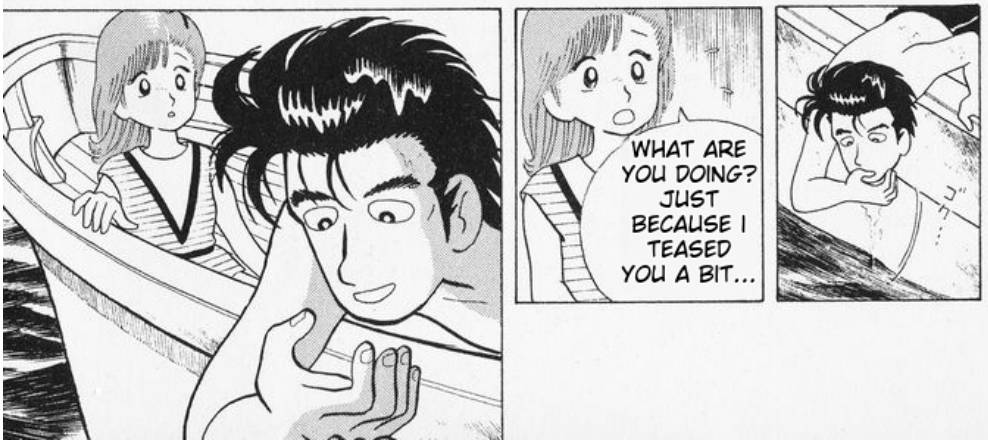
YOU GOT CAUGHT IN THE CURRENT, THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOU TO STOP.
KYAA, MR. YAMAOKA!!

?
SEA WATER TASTES GOOD!?
ARE YOU OKAY? YOU'RE DOING STUPID THINGS... THE WATER FROM THE AKASHI STRAIT WAS DELICIOUS, RIGHT?
CHIIE, THERE'S NO WAY SEA WATER TASTES GOOD.


WHAT ARE YOU DOING? JUST BECAUSE I TEASED YOU A BIT...
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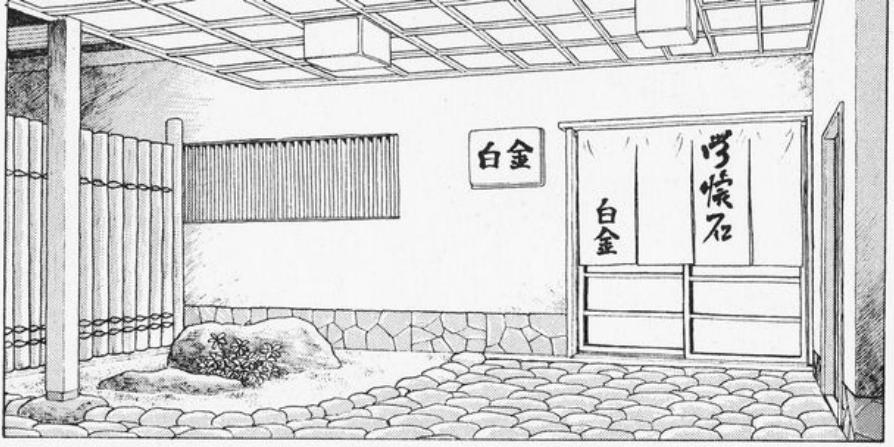
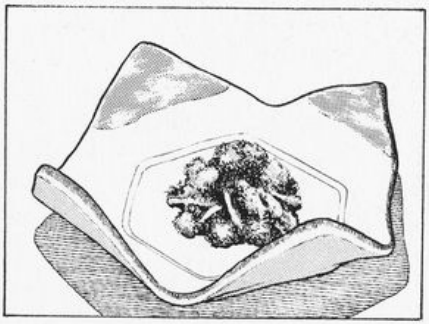


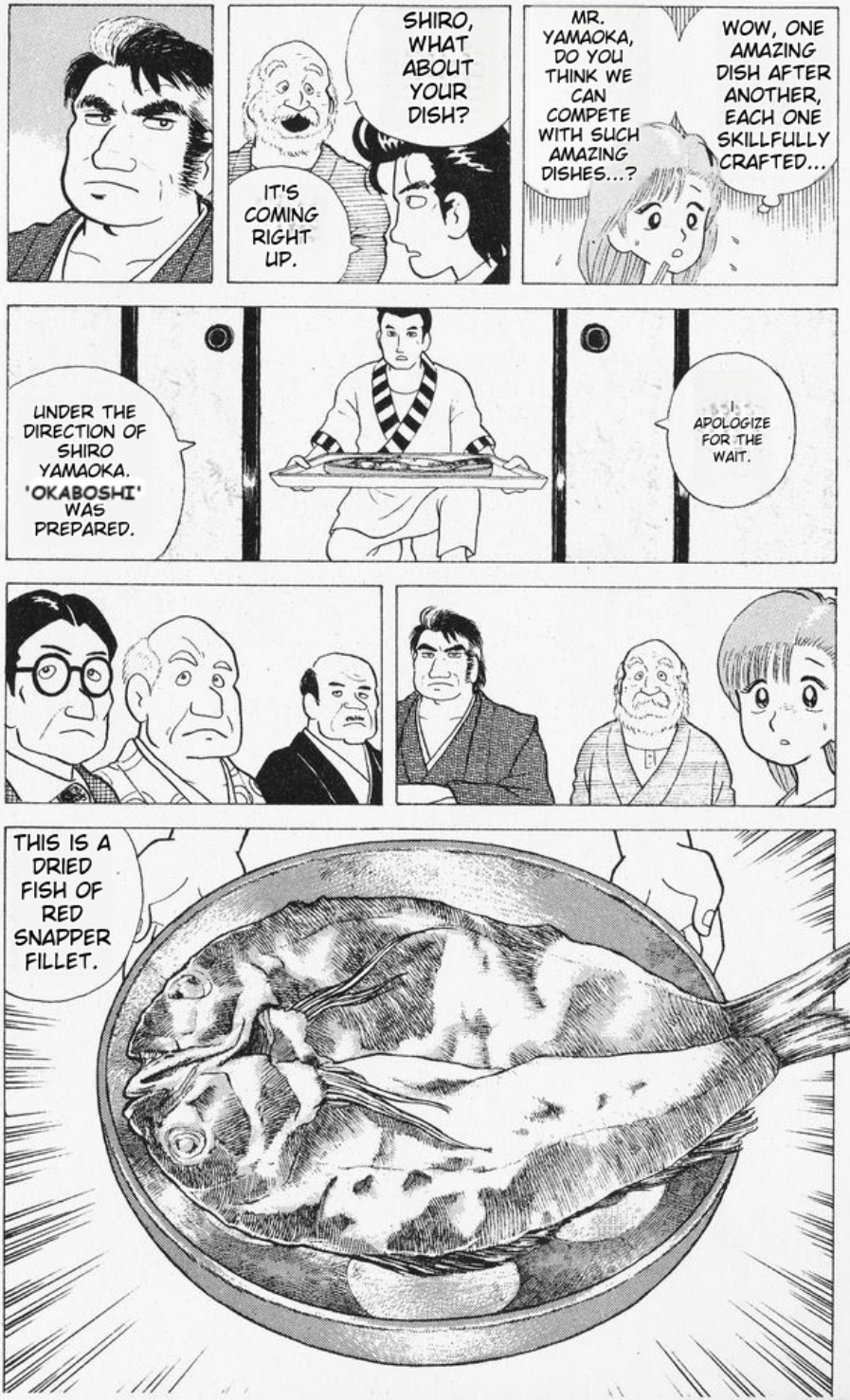


BEACH VITEX IS A PLANT FROM THE VERBENA FAMILY. ITS YOUNG LEAVES ARE QUITE THE TREAT.

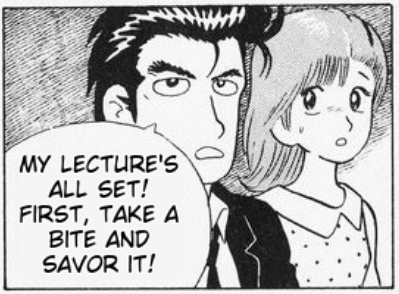
WE, FROM 'KYOKAZE,' PRESENT THE CREATION OF SEA BREAM SCENTED WITH YUZU.
MMM, IT'S DELICIOUS. THE UMAMI OF SEA BREAM AND KOMBU COMBINED, WRAPPED GENTLY BY THE 'UNOHANA'...
THE DELICIOUS 'UNOHANA' IS MADE FROM OKARA, YET IT'S SO REFINED...
MMM... THE SWEET TASTE OF MORNING AND THE SAVORY FLAVOR OF BEANS COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER PERFECTLY.
HMM, IT'S WRAPPED IN DAIKOKUJI NATTO.
OH, HOW UNIQUE! SOMETHING IS WRAPPED IN THINLY SLICED SEA BREAM.
FROM 'FUKUYAMA,' WE OFFER THE SEA BREAM WITH PINE BARK.
WOW, WHAT A FANTASTIC IDEA...

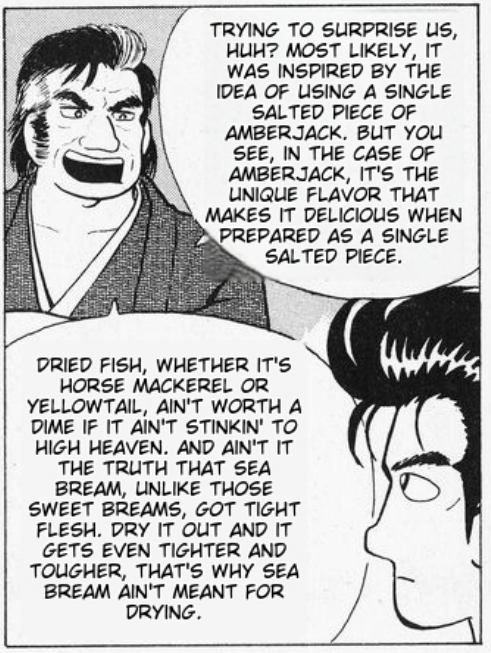
WELL, THIS SKIN IS ALL DARK, LIKE THE BARK OF A PINE TREE.
THE ELASTICITY OF THE SKIN AND THE DELICIOUSNESS OF THE FLESH ARE PERFECTLY BALANCED. TRULY A MASTERFUL CREATION.
YOU SEE, THE BEAUTY OF THIS DISH LIES IN THE ABILITY TO SAVOR THE FLAVOR OF THE SEA BREAM SKIN MORE RICHLY THAN IN THE USUAL PREPARATION. THE TECHNIQUE IS QUITE CHALLENGING, YOU SEE.
WE'LL BE SERVING YOU OUR SEA BREAM SOMEN. NORMALLY, IT'S SERVED IN A WOODEN BOWL, BUT TODAY WE'RE USING THE RICE BOWL OF MASTER TOJIN!
OHH...
YOU POUR HOT WATER ONLY ON THE SKIN, AND AS SOON AS IT SHRINKS, YOU PLUNGE IT INTO COLD WATER TO COOL. THE TIMING OF THAT IS WHAT MAKES IT SO CHALLENGING.
IT'S QUITE LABOR-INTENSIVE, YET THE FACT THAT IT'S NOT AT ALL FISHY IS QUITE AN ACHIEVEMENT.
THANK YOU SO MUCH!! TO RECEIVE PRAISE FROM MASTER KAIBARA IS A TRUE HONOR!
OH, I SEE, IT'S A BIT OUT OF SEASON FOR SOMEN, BUT NONETHELESS...
ズズッ
YES, WE GRATED SEA BREAM FLESH TO BRING OUT ITS STICKINESS, AND THEN EXTRUDED IT THROUGH FINE HOLES.
MY GOODNESS, THIS ISN'T YOUR ORDINARY SOMEN! IS THIS SOMEN MADE FROM SEA BREAM FLESH?

HEY, 'OISHINBO'
VOLUME 5.



NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE TALK ABOUT AMATEUR COOKING, THIS IS JUST GOING TOO FAR!!
やれやれ
LISTEN UP, THIS AIN'T JUST ANY FISH, THIS HERE'S THE KING OF FISH, THE SEA BREAM! TURNING A ROYAL CATCH LIKE THIS INTO MERE DRIED FISH IS SACRILEGE!
WHAT THE HECK, DRIED FISH!!


MY LECTURE'S ALL SET! FIRST, TAKE A BITE AND SAVOR IT!

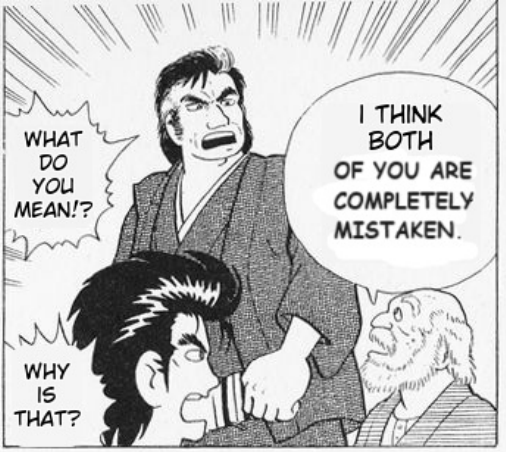

TRYING TO SURPRISE US, HUH? MOST LIKELY, IT WAS INSPIRED BY THE IDEA OF USING A SINGLE SALTED PIECE OF AMBERJACK. BUT YOU SEE, IN THE CASE OF AMBERJACK, IT'S THE UNIQUE FLAVOR THAT MAKES IT DELICIOUS WHEN PREPARED AS A SINGLE SALTED PIECE.
DRIED FISH, WHETHER IT'S HORSE MACKEREL OR YELLOWTAIL, AIN'T WORTH A DIME IF IT AIN'T STINKIN' TO HIGH HEAVEN. AND AIN'T IT THE TRUTH THAT SEA BREAM, UNLIKE THOSE SWEET BREAMS, GOT TIGHT FLESH. DRY IT OUT AND IT GETS EVEN TIGHTER AND TOUGHER, THAT'S WHY SEA BREAM AIN'T MEANT FOR DRYING.

HMPH, WHAT A JOKE!
WELL, SINCE SHIROU WENT THROUGH ALL THE TROUBLE TO MAKE IT...

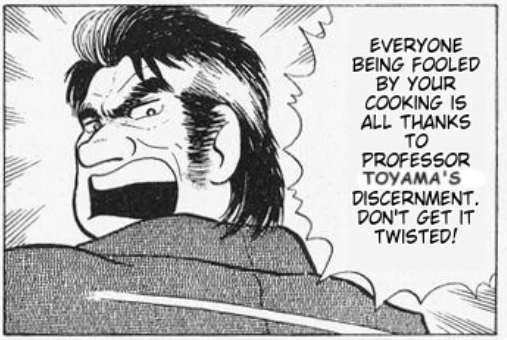
WHAT ON EARTH DID THEY SMEAR ON THIS SEA BREAM?!
HMM? WHAT IS THIS TASTE!?
IT'S JUST SALT, YOU KNOW.

OH, IT'S 'OISHINBO 5'!

UGH...AGH...
I ACTUALLY TRIED DRINKING THE WATER FROM THE AKASHI STRAIT.
BUT HOW IS THAT ACHIEVED?
SO, IS THIS SEASONING ADJUSTED TO MATCH THE SALTINESS OF THE SEA IN THE AKASHI STRAIT?
HEY, YOU GUYS! FALLING FOR SUCH A MAN'S SCHEME, WHAT'S GOT YOU SO FLUSTERED!
IN THIS RICH AND RUSTIC FLAVOR, SURELY THIS IS THE ESSENCE OF THE TASTE OF SEA BREAM.
I SEE...THE TASTE OF SEA BREAM WE JUST EXPERIENCED MUST BE THE NATURAL FLAVOR THAT THE SEA BREAM OF AKASHI INHERENTLY POSSESSES, BLESSED BY NATURE.
YOUNG GIRLS ARE NATURALLY BEAUTIFUL AS THEY ARE, LIKE BARE SKIN, YET THEY END UP LOOKING LIKE THEY'VE BEEN CAKED WITH HEAVY MAKEUP.
SEA BREAM IS NOT ONLY BEAUTIFULLY COLORED BUT ALSO OFFERS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR DELICATE CRAFTSMANSHIP, SO IT SEEMS WE HAVE A TENDENCY TO FUSS OVER IT TOO MUCH.
ONE MUST NOT LET TECHNIQUE OVERSHADOW, FOR WITHOUT TECHNIQUE, ART WOULD CEASE TO EXIST!!
COOKING, YOU SEE, IS AN ART THAT PAINTS VARIOUS PICTURES FROM A SINGLE INGREDIENT!! SAYING IT'S BETTER TO JUST GRILL OR BOIL A FISH YOU CAUGHT IS LIKE A PRIMITIVE NOT UNDERSTANDING THAT FINE DINING IS AN ART!!

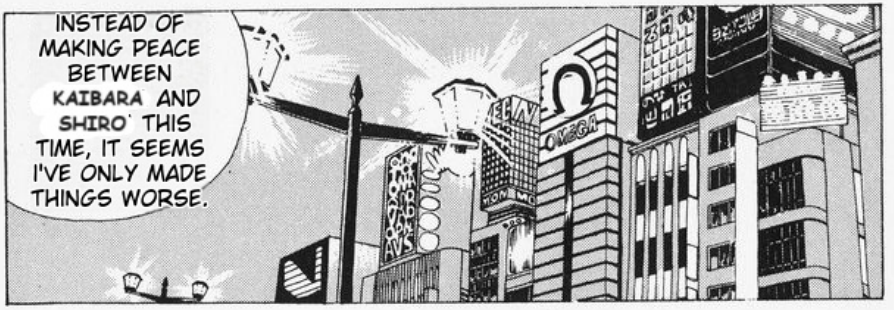

WHAT DO YOU MEAN!?
I THINK BOTH OF YOU ARE COMPLETELY MISTAKEN.
WHY IS THAT?

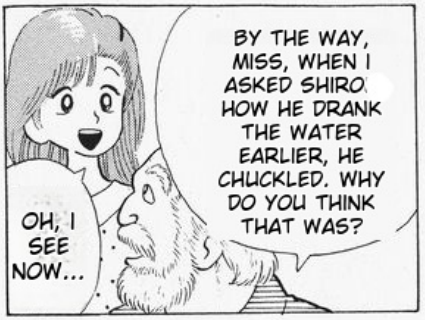
IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, THIS IS TRULY THE EPITOME OF CULINARY ART ITSELF. IT'S LIKE, YUZAN AND SHIRO ARE WALKING DOWN THE SAME PATH BUT REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE EACH OTHER'S TALENTS, ISN'T IT?
SHIRO'S DISHES MAY SEEM UNTOUCHED AT FIRST GLANCE, BUT IN REALITY, IT'S DIFFERENT. THE CHOICE AND AMOUNT OF SALT, THE WAY IT'S DRIED, GRILLED, EVERY DETAIL MUST HAVE BEEN METICULOUSLY CONSIDERED. IT'S LIKE THE EPITOME OF SKILLFUL CRAFTSMANSHIP, ISN'T IT?


EVERYONE BEING FOOLED BY YOUR COOKING IS ALL THANKS TO PROFESSOR TOYAMA'S DISCERNMENT. DON'T GET IT TWISTED!

PROFESSOR TOYAMA IS TRULY AMAZING. BOTH KAIBARA AND MR. YAMAOKA ARE AS QUIET AS MICE.

HAHAHA! I WIN, I WIN!


INSTEAD OF MAKING PEACE BETWEEN KAIBARA AND SHIRO THIS TIME, IT SEEMS I'VE ONLY MADE THINGS WORSE.
OMEGA


BY THE WAY, MISS, WHEN I ASKED SHIRO HOW HE DRANK THE WATER EARLIER, HE CHUCKLED. WHY DO YOU THINK THAT WAS?
OH, I SEE NOW...

JUST LEAVE IT, THAT MAN...

OH, YOU CHATTERBOX!

IT'S NOTHING, REALLY.
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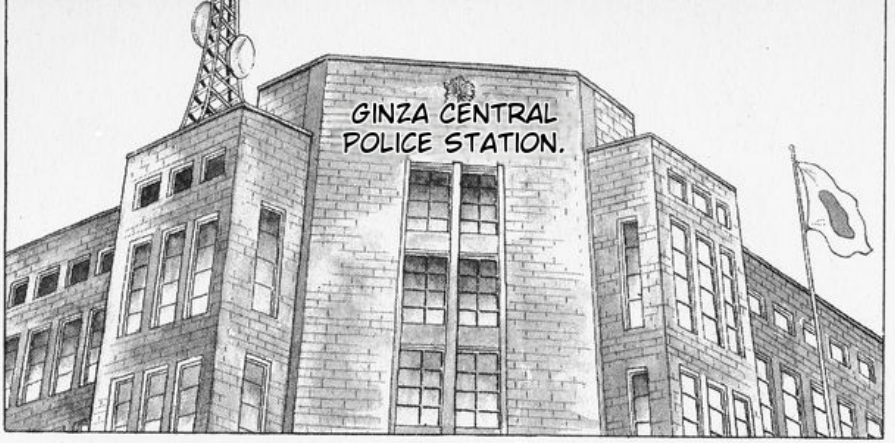
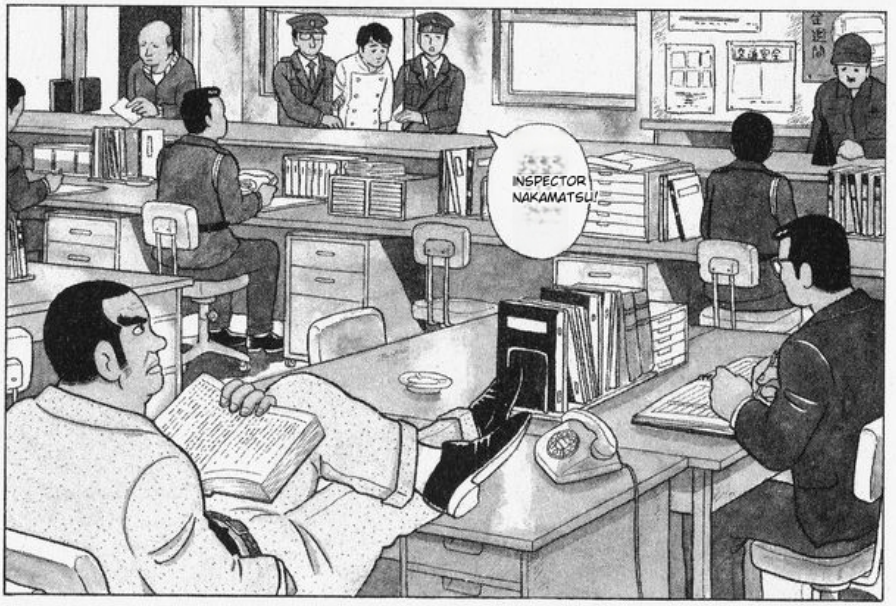
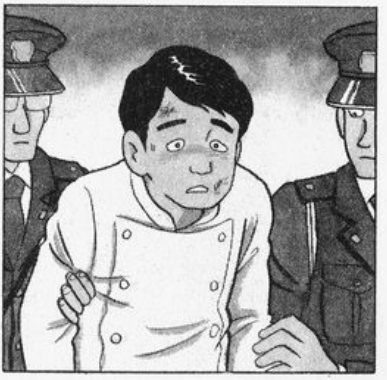
HAHAHA! HAHAHA!
HA! HOW AMUSING!

第4話
スパイスの秘密


GINZA CENTRAL POLICE STATION.


INSPECTOR NAKAMATSU!

WE'VE RESCUED A GUY NEAR THE MIHARABASHI AREA.
WHO'S THIS GUY?



W-WHAT!?
UM, EXCUSE ME...
WHO AM I...?
AMNESIA!?
OH, REALLY? I CHECKED WITH THE POLICE IN TOKYO AND NEIGHBORING PREFECTURES, BUT THERE'S NO MISSING PERSON REPORT MATCHING THIS MYSTERIOUS GUY.
銀座中央警察署
HE'S DRESSED LIKE A CHEF...
I JUST FOUND THIS SCRAP OF PAPER STUFFED IN HIS PANTS POCKET, BUT MAN, IT'S A REAL HEAD-SCRATCHER...
YEAH, BUT THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO CLUE INDICATING HIS IDENTITY.

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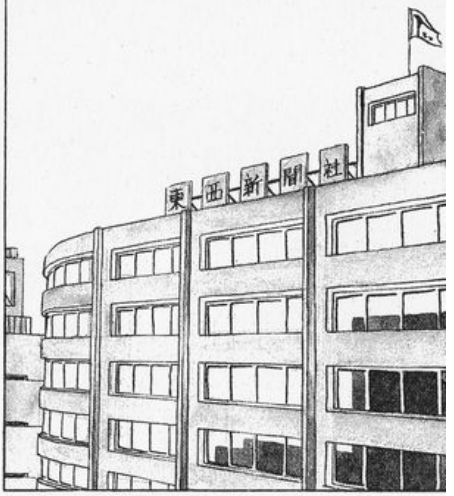
タレペシカタイナマスメフェンロコオジク
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS THIS?
HMM! COULD THIS BE SOME KIND OF CODE?
THE PERSON WHO HAD IT DOESN'T HAVE A CLUE WHAT IT IS.
I-I'M TERRIBLY SORRY...
WELL, THIS SMELLS LIKE CURRY.
OH, IT'S THE SMELL OF CURRY POWDER, I SEE.
INDEED.
JUST THE MENTION OF CURRY MAKES MY HEART SKIP A BEAT. IT TRIGGERS SOMETHING IN MY MEMORY...
MY HEAD IS SPINNING...
SO, WHAT I'M ASKING IS, COULD YOU ASK THE HIGHER-UPS TO PUT THIS GOMBEI GUY IN YOUR NEWSPAPER? MAYBE SOMEONE WHO KNOWS HIM WILL REPORT TO THE POLICE.
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THE HIGHER-UPS SHOULD BE AWARE OF IT.
PLEASE, I BEG OF YOU...

東西新聞
私は誰!?
LOST MEMORIES.


東西新聞社

WELL THEN...
WELL, WELL... IS THAT SO? THE FOLKS IN THE SOCIAL DEPARTMENT WILL JUMP AT THE CHANCE TO COVER IT.

WHAT A NEWSPAPER REPORTER NEEDS IS CURIOSITY AND A BIT OF NOSINESS!
ARE YOU GOING?

RUMOR HAS IT, THAT GUY'S WIFE STORMED INTO THE GINZA CENTRAL POLICE STATION.
THEY'VE IDENTIFIED THAT PERSON!
THE POWER OF THE NEWSPAPER IS TRULY REMARKABLE, ISN'T IT?

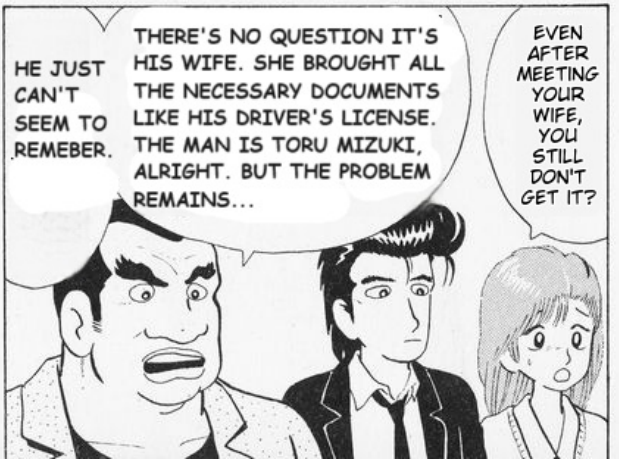
SPOUTING OFF LIKE THAT, IT'S CRYSTAL CLEAR YOU'RE JUST LOOKING FOR AN EXCUSE TO SLACK OFF WORK.

IT'S A GOOD THING HIS WIFE CAME, ISN'T IT?
YEAH, BUT HE DOESN'T BELIEVE HER...

I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

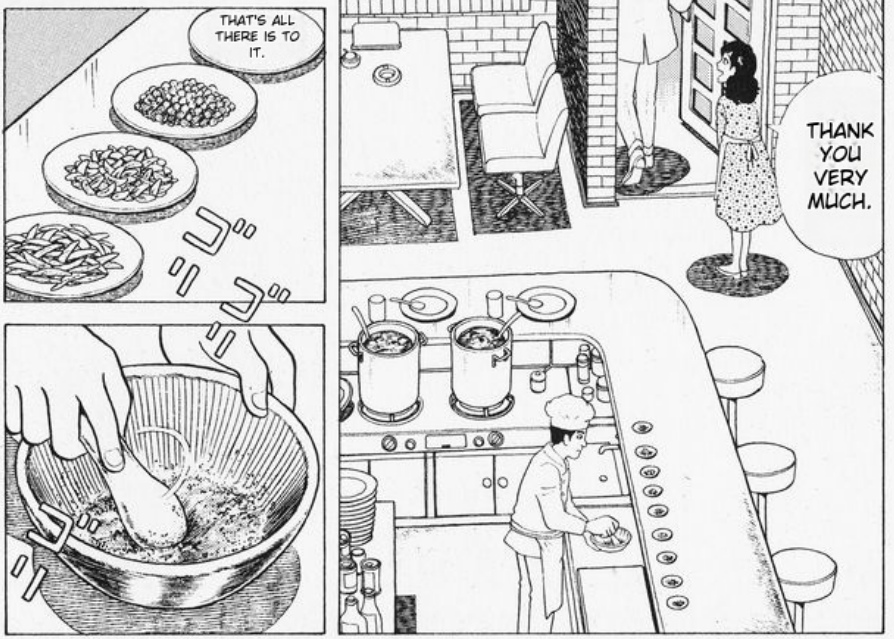
WHY DON'T I UNDERSTAND? IT'S ME, YOUR WIFE, KEIKO!
YOU ARE TORU MIZUKI!

OH... WHAT ON EARTH...!


HE JUST CAN'T SEEM TO REMEBER.
THERE'S NO QUESTION IT'S HIS WIFE. SHE BROUGHT ALL THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS LIKE HIS DRIVER'S LICENSE. THE MAN IS TORU MIZUKI, ALRIGHT. BUT THE PROBLEM REMAINS...
EVEN AFTER MEETING YOUR WIFE, YOU STILL DON'T GET IT?

I CAN'T HELP BUT WISH THAT HIS MEMORIES WON'T COME BACK AS THEY WERE BEFORE...
THE TRUTH IS, I...
.....
I THINK IT'D BE BEST FOR THE MISSUS TO CAREFULLY ASK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE AND AFTER HE LOST HIS MEMORIES...
AYE, IT TAKES TIME TO FIGURE THINGS OUT.
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT!?
HUH!?
IT WAS FIVE YEARS AGO WHEN MY HUSBAND AND I FIRST MET... HE WAS THE CHEF AT THE RESTAURANT WHERE I STARTED WORKING AS A WAITRESS...
THAT'S HOW WE ENDED UP GETTING MARRIED, AND MY HARDWORKING AND DILIGENT HUSBAND FINALLY FULFILLED HIS DREAM OF OWNING A SHOP LAST YEAR, USING THE MONEY HE HAD SAVED UP OVER THE YEARS...
カレーハウス ホット
カレーハウス ホット

HEY, 'OISHINBO' VOLUME 5.



DON'T WORRY, IT'S ALL GOOD, JUST ONE LAST PUSH.
WELL THEN, I'LL BE HEADING HOME FIRST.

AFTER FINISHING WORK, I'M HERE EVERY NIGHT UNTIL LATE, I'M WORRIED ABOUT MY HEALTH, YOU KNOW.
OKAY, OKAY, GOT IT. BUT PLEASE WRAP UP EARLY, OKAY?

酒
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
CHIAKI

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HEY, ISN'T THAT KEIKO OVER THERE?

……!

OH, IT'S 'OISHINBO 5'!

KEIKO!!
I'VE FINALLY DONE IT!!
I'VE CREATED THE WORLD'S BEST CURRY POWDER, BABY!!
YOU'VE GOT TO RUN AWAY!
LOOK AT THIS GUY, TRYING TO ACT ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY AS KEIKO'S HUSBAND.
YOU...
WHO IS THIS GUY!?

YOU BRAT!! HOW DARE YOU BRING ANOTHER MAN INTO THIS?!
YOU...
KEIKO...WHAT ON EARTH IS THIS!?
WHA...WHO ARE YOU CALLING 'ANOTHER MAN??
I WON'T LET YOU GO HARASSING KEIKO ANYMORE FROM NOW ON!
YOU DON'T BELONG HERE, YOU BASTARD! GET OUT!!!
YOU IDIOT!!

WOW!
ダダダダ
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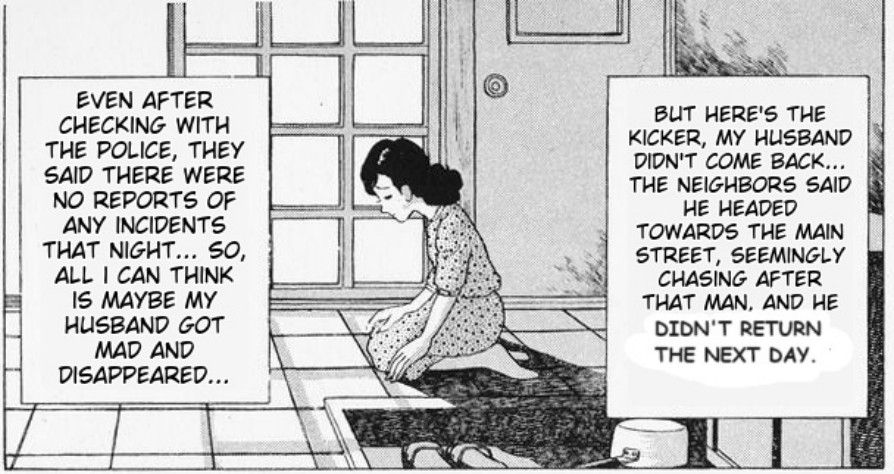
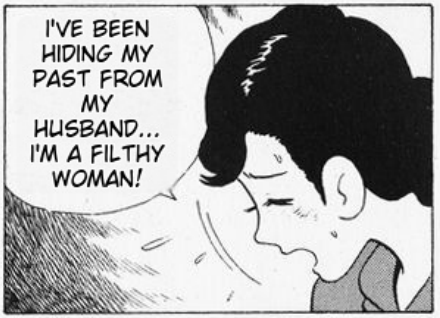
GAH, MY SHOULDER BONE!!
HAVING MY PAST EXPOSED TO MY HUSBAND LEFT ME FROZEN IN DESPAIR, UNABLE TO MOVE A MUSCLE...


EVEN AFTER CHECKING WITH THE POLICE, THEY SAID THERE WERE NO REPORTS OF ANY INCIDENTS THAT NIGHT... SO, ALL I CAN THINK IS MAYBE MY HUSBAND GOT MAD AND DISAPPEARED...
BUT HERE'S THE KICKER, MY HUSBAND DIDN'T COME BACK... THE NEIGHBORS SAID HE HEADED TOWARDS THE MAIN STREET, SEEMINGLY CHASING AFTER THAT MAN. AND HE DIDN'T RETURN THE NEXT DAY.

WHAT IF MY HUSBAND REGAINS HIS MEMORY AND REMEMBERS THAT MAN AND ME...
I WAS RELIEVED WHEN MY HUSBAND RETURNED SAFELY, BUT I'M ALSO HALF SCARED OUT OF MY WITS.


I'VE BEEN HIDING MY PAST FROM MY HUSBAND... I'M A FILTHY WOMAN!

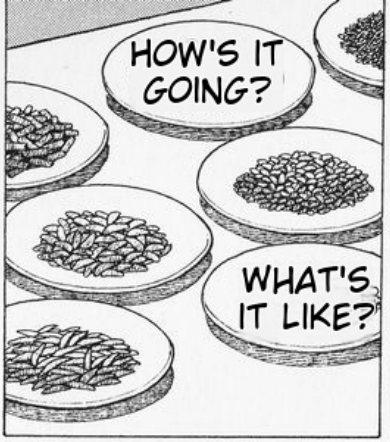
IT SEEMS LIKE MY HUSBAND MUST HAVE HIT HIS HEAD SOMEWHERE DURING THE SCUFFLE WITH THAT MAN.
SOMEHOW YOUR HUSBAND GOT LOST BECAUSE HE WAS FOUND CIRCLING AROUND GINZA UNTIL HE WAS RESCUED BY OUR LOCAL POLICE STATION.

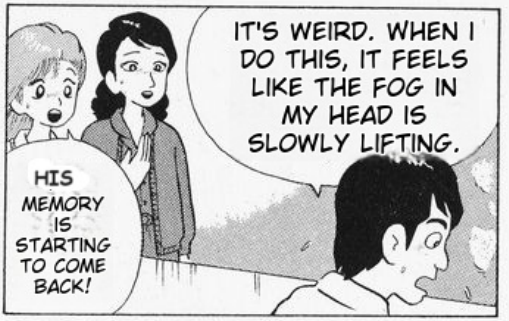
NONSENSE! HOW COULD A PERSON WITH A TAINTED HEART GENUINELY LOVE YOUR HUSBAND SO EARNESTLY? YOU'RE A PURE SOUL!

SO THIS IS... MY SHOP...
THIS IS YOUR SHOP, MAN. CAN'T YOU RECALL ANYTHING?
カレーハウス ポット
.....
I USED TO RUN THIS SHOP... CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?
I DON'T KNOW.

NO, FORGETTING EVEN ABOUT YOUR HARD-EARNED SHOP IS JUST TOO PITIFUL...
I GOTTA FIND A WAY TO JOG HIS MEMORY...
WHAT DO WE DO? SHOULD WE JUST LET HIM REMAIN CLUELESS, AFTER ALL?
MIZUKI, LET'S MAKE CURRY, AND YOU TOO, MISSUS!
CURRY!?
WHY CURRY AT A TIME LIKE THIS...
HUH?
LET'S GIVE IT A SHOT.
THAT PIECE OF PAPER THIS PERSON HAD...
AH, HERE IT IS, I BROUGHT IT.

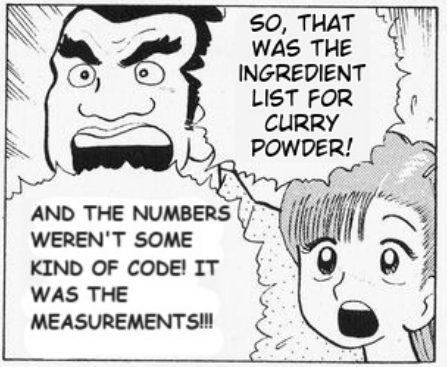
ME?
GIVE IT A TRY.
MIZUKI, PLEASE CHOP THE ONION.
I'LL SAUTÉ THE ONION TO MAKE THE ROUX.
WHAT SHOULD I DO TO MAKE A STOCK?
ABSOLUTELY SPLENDID.
WELL, LOOK AT THOSE AMAZING KNIFE SKILLS!
OH MY, I CAN'T BELIEVE I CAN DO THIS!
……!
YOU'VE GOT SOME SERIOUS SKILLS!
SMOOTH MOVES, NO HESITATION.
NEXT, I'LL SAUTÉ THE ONION WITH GHEE!
GHEE=CLARIFIED BUTTER FROM WATER BUFFALO MILK


HOW'S IT GOING?
WHAT'S IT LIKE?

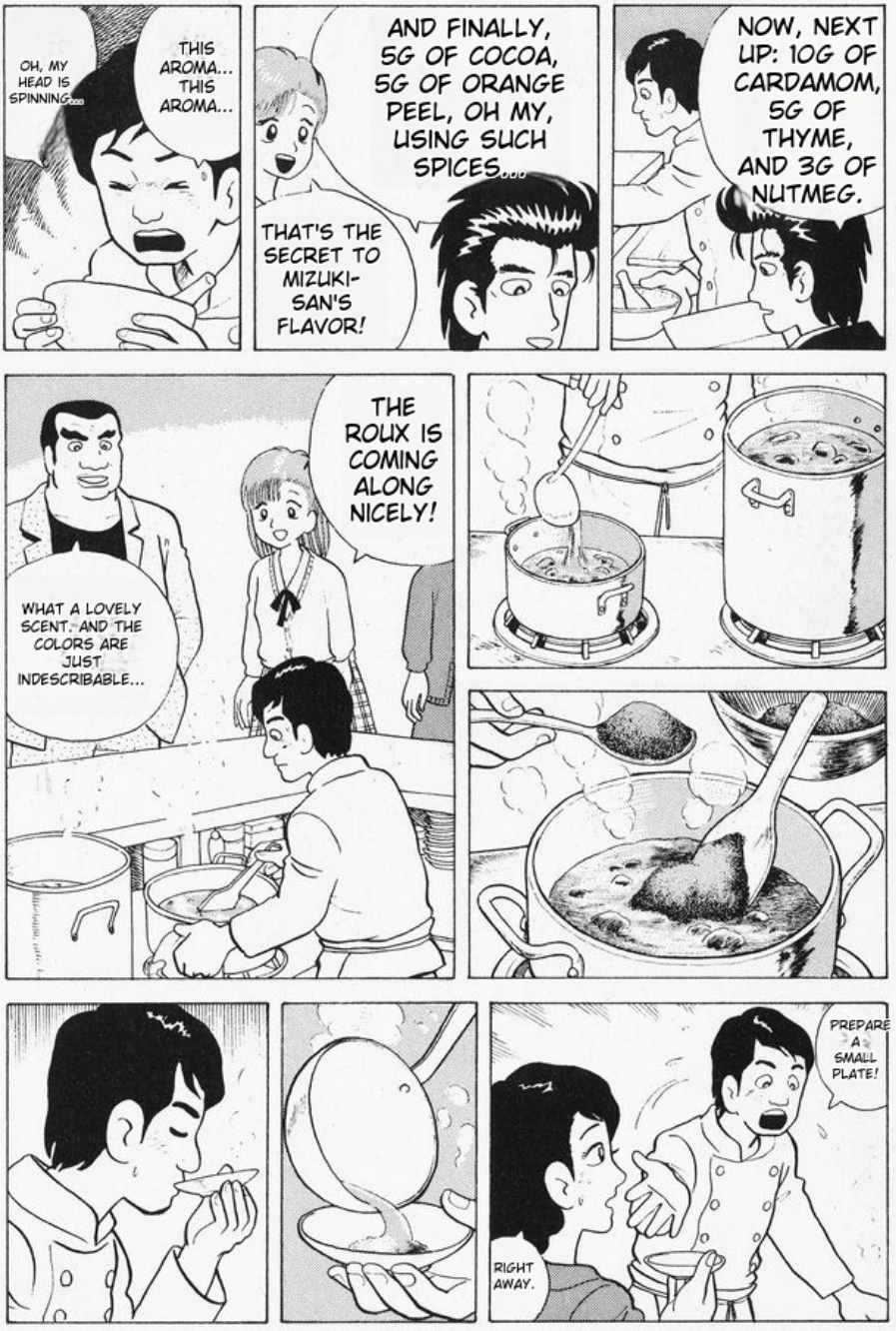

HIS MEMORY IS STARTING TO COME BACK!
IT'S WEIRD. WHEN I DO THIS, IT FEELS LIKE THE FOG IN MY HEAD IS SLOWLY LIFTING.

TURMERIC 30G, RED PEPPER 1G, PEPPER 7G, CINNAMON 4G...
NOW, LET'S MIX UP THAT CURRY POWDER. FOLLOW MY INSTRUCTIONS ON THE MEASUREMENTS.

TO MAKE DELICIOUS CURRY POWDER, YOU NEED A WIDE VARIETY OF SPICES. CURRY POWDER IS LIKE AN ORCHESTRA OF SPICES, SO IT NEVER GETS OLD, YOU KNOW.
IT'S QUITE THE MIX OF SPICES TO BLEND.


SO, THAT WAS THE INGREDIENT LIST FOR CURRY POWDER!
AND THE NUMBERS WEREN'T SOME KIND OF CODE! IT WAS THE MEASUREMENTS!!!

THE FIRST TIME I SAW THIS, THE PAPER SMELLED LIKE CURRY. I THOUGHT IT WAS A RECIPE, ESPECIALLY AFTER HEARING THE MISSUS TALK ABOUT IT.


OH, MY HEAD IS SPINNING...
THIS AROMA... THIS AROMA...
AND FINALLY, 5G OF COCOA, 5G OF ORANGE PEEL, OH MY, USING SUCH SPICES...
THAT'S THE SECRET TO MIZUKI-SAN'S FLAVOR!
NOW, NEXT UP: 10G OF CARDAMOM, 5G OF THYME, AND 3G OF NUTMEG.
THE ROUX IS COMING ALONG NICELY!
WHAT A LOVELY SCENT. AND THE COLORS ARE JUST INDESCRIBABLE...
PREPARE A SMALL PLATE!
RIGHT AWAY.

WITH THIS CURRY POWDER, BEEF CURRY, PORK CURRY, EVEN SEAFOOD CURRY WILL ALL TURN OUT TO BE SENSATIONAL...
WITH A RICH, FULL-BODIED AROMA, A VIVID AND INTENSE, COMPLEX FLAVOR...
.....
MY MEMORY'S BACK!?
YOU REMEMBERED!?
WHAT'S THIS! THIS RIGHT HERE IS THE CURRY POWDER I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR!
YOU... YOU FINALLY REMEMBERED, DIDN'T YOU...
KEIKO...
I MADE THE ROUX WITH IT, THEN DASHED OUT OF THE SHOP TO HAVE KEIKO TASTE IT.
THAT'S RIGHT... THAT NIGHT, I FINALLY SUCCEEDED IN CREATING THE CURRY POWDER I DESIRED...
OH, BUT...
GET A GRIP... YOU UNDERSTAND KEIKO'S FEELINGS, DON'T YOU, SIR! YOU'LL FORGIVE HER.

I... CLIMBED THE STAIRS...
SO, WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT?!
SO WHAT DID YOU DO NEXT?
I WAS SO OBSESSED, I DASHED TO THE APARTMENT... I JUST HAD TO LET KEIKO TASTE IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, SO I RACED UP THE STAIRS OF THE APARTMENT...
WHAT'S NEXT?
NOPE! YOU DIDN'T GO TO KEIKO'S PLACE!!!
FROM THERE, MY MEMORY GOES BLANK AS I MIRACULOUSLY FOUND MYSELF AT THE GINZA POLICE STATION!
I CAN'T REMEMBER BEYOND THAT POINT.
KEIKO, DID I COME TO YOUR PLACE?
S-SO THEN...
AND YOU WERE SO EXCITED THAT YOU ENDED UP TAKING A TUMBLE DOWN THE STAIRS, AND YOU ENDED UP WANDERING AROUND WITHOUT A CLUE OF WHERE YOU WERE...
WELL, YOU COMPLETED YOUR CURRY POWDER, AND YOUR HEART WAS JUMPING FOR JOY...
I SEE... THEN WHERE DID I GO...

OH, IT'S 'OISHINBO 5'!

BUT... WHEN YOU SUDDENLY SAID IT'S ALL AN ACT AND ASKED FOR MY HELP, I WAS DUMBFOUNDED...
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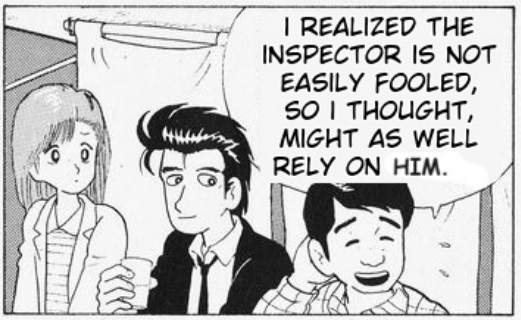
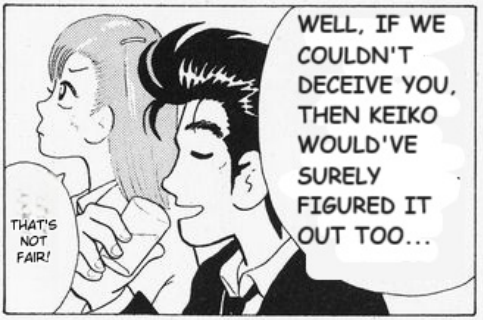

I REALIZED THE INSPECTOR IS NOT EASILY FOOLED, SO I THOUGHT, MIGHT AS WELL RELY ON HIM.

YOU'RE A CRAFTY ONE, THOUGH.
WELL, EVEN WITH MOST OF HIS MEMORIES BACK, THERE ARE STILL SOME THINGS HE CAN'T REMEMBER...


WELL, IF WE COULDN'T DECEIVE YOU, THEN KEIKO WOULD'VE SURELY FIGURED IT OUT TOO...
THAT'S NOT FAIR!

I WAS COMPLETELY FOOLED TOO! HOW CRUEL! TO THINK THAT THEY WOULDN'T TELL ME UNTIL TODAY!

WELL, THAT CURRY POWDER IS THE REAL DEAL. WITH THIS, BUSINESS WILL THRIVE EVEN MORE, AND YOUR HOME WILL PROSPER.

I KNOW KEIKO'S HAD HER STRUGGLES IN THE PAST WITH THAT MAN... BUT NOW, I WANT TO DO SOMETHING TO MAKE HER FUTURE BETTER.
EXCUSE ME... I COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT KEIKO'S PAST. I BELIEVE WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR HUMANS IS THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.

HAHA, MUST'VE HAD SOME ROUGH VISITORS COMING TO SEE HIM, FOR SURE.
AFTER THEY LET HIM OUT OF THE HOSPITAL, HE RACED OUTTA TOKYO AND BACK HOME! HAHAHAHA!
!!!
BY THE WAY, THAT GUY ENDED UP CHECKING INTO A HOSPITAL IN SHINBASHI. STRANGELY ENOUGH, WHILE HE WAS HOSPITALIZED, HE MANAGED TO BREAK THE OTHER SHOULDER BONE AS WELL.
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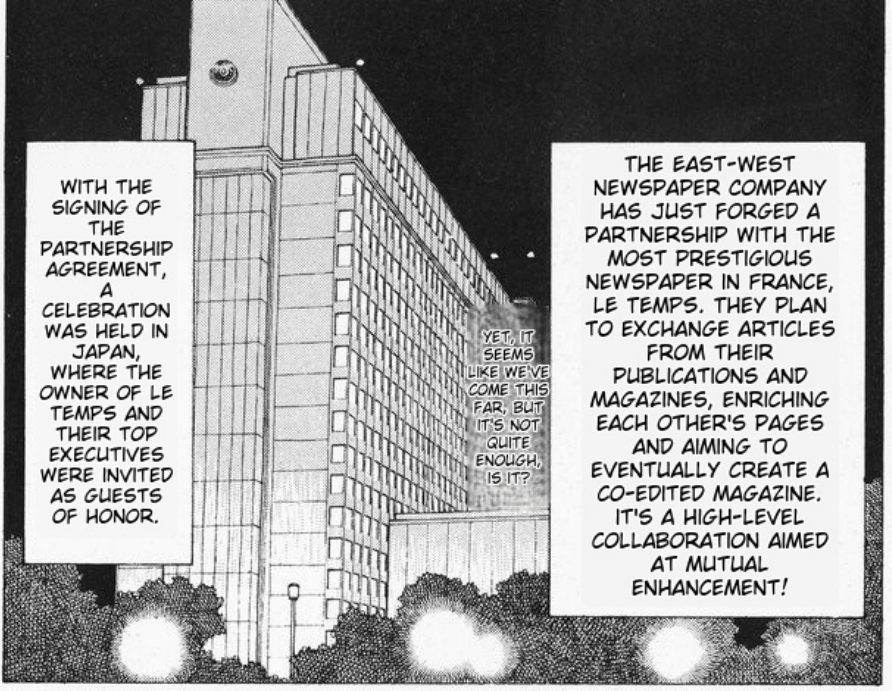
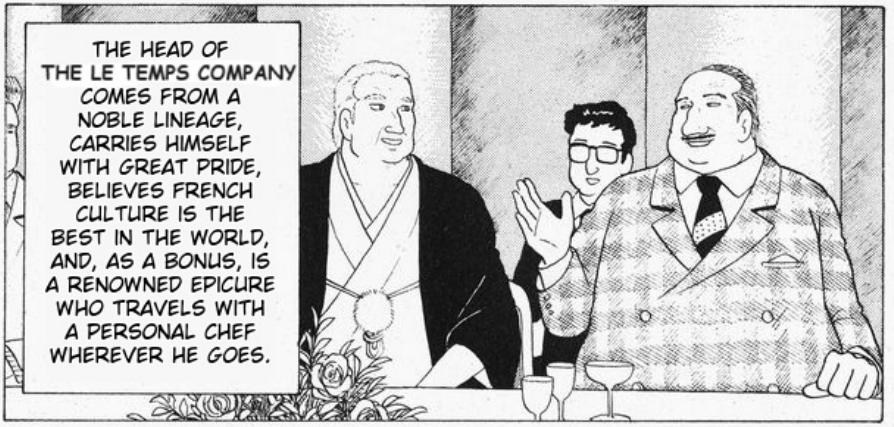
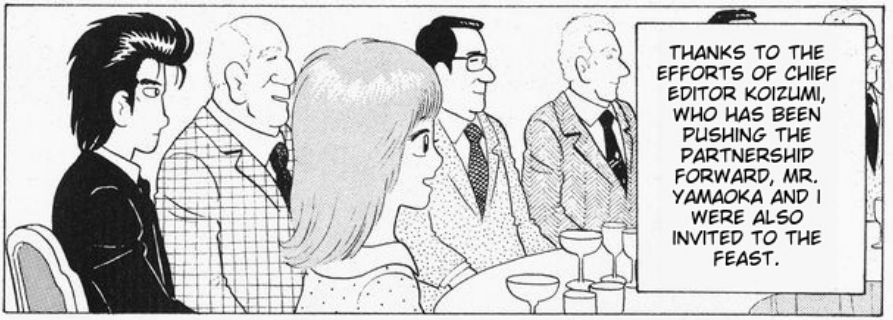
YEP, HE IS.
LOOK AT HIM, ALL DAPPER AND GENTLE ON THE OUTSIDE, BUT INSIDE, HE'S TOUGH AS NAILS, A REAL DEAL MAN.

第5話

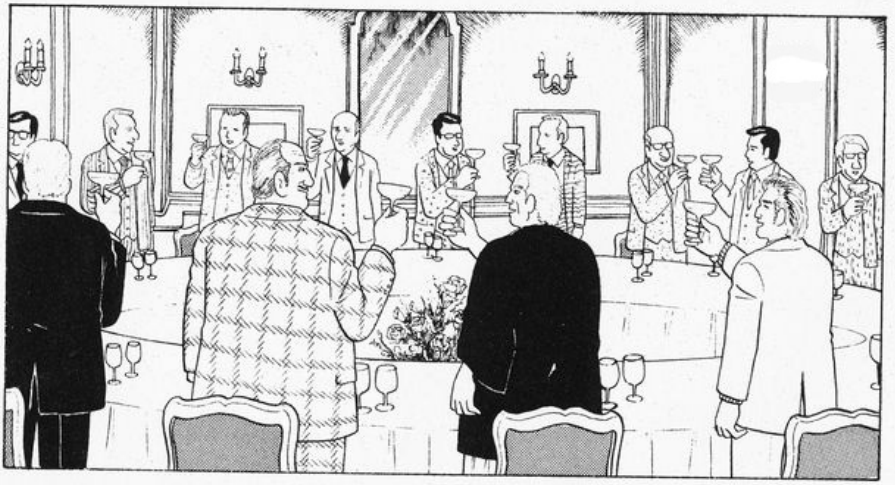
臭さの魅力


WITH THE SIGNING OF THE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT, A CELEBRATION WAS HELD IN JAPAN, WHERE THE OWNER OF LE TEMPS AND THEIR TOP EXECUTIVES WERE INVITED AS GUESTS OF HONOR.
YET, IT SEEMS LIKE WE'VE COME THIS FAR, BUT IT'S NOT QUITE ENOUGH, IS IT?
THE EAST-WEST NEWSPAPER COMPANY HAS JUST FORGED A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS NEWSPAPER IN FRANCE, LE TEMPS. THEY PLAN TO EXCHANGE ARTICLES FROM THEIR PUBLICATIONS AND MAGAZINES, ENRICHING EACH OTHER'S PAGES AND AIMING TO EVENTUALLY CREATE A CO-EDITED MAGAZINE. IT'S A HIGH-LEVEL COLLABORATION AIMED AT MUTUAL ENHANCEMENT!


THE HEAD OF THE LE TEMPS COMPANY COMES FROM A NOBLE LINEAGE, CARRIES HIMSELF WITH GREAT PRIDE, BELIEVES FRENCH CULTURE IS THE BEST IN THE WORLD, AND, AS A BONUS, IS A RENOWNED EPICURE WHO TRAVELS WITH A PERSONAL CHEF WHEREVER HE GOES.

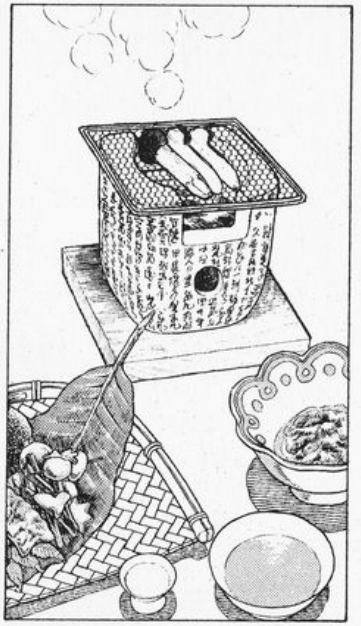

THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF CHIEF EDITOR KOIZUMI, WHO HAS BEEN PUSHING THE PARTNERSHIP FORWARD, MR. YAMAOKA AND I WERE ALSO INVITED TO THE FEAST.

OH, IT'S 'OISHINBO 5'!

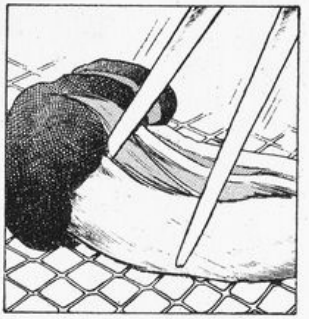


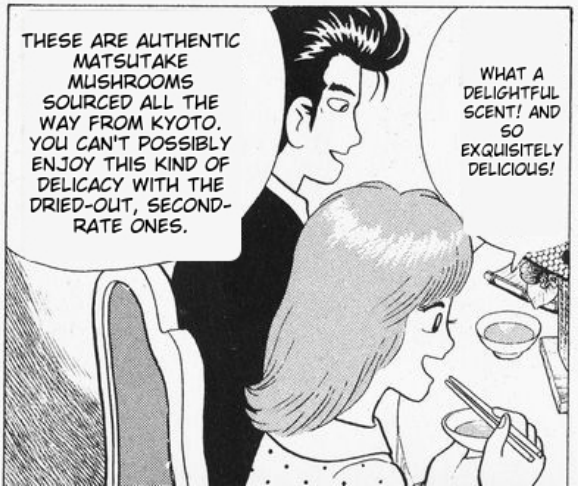
WELL... I GUESS THE EAST-WEST NEWSPAPER IS JUST A BACKWATER PUBLICATION IN ASIA, HUH...!
HMPH...
IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S A CULINARY BATTLE BETWEEN JAPAN AND FRANCE, SO PLEASE ENJOY IT TO THE FULLEST.
TODAY'S DISHES ARE A RESULT OF A CULINARY SHOWDOWN BETWEEN THE JAPANESE AND FRENCH SIDES, EACH SHOWCASING THEIR SKILLS.
WELL, WELL, YOU DON'T APPRECIATE THE BEAUTY OF JAPANESE CUISINE, DO YOU...!
ピキ
JAPANESE CUISINE IS UNDOUBTEDLY A GENRE OF ITS OWN IN THE WORLD OF CULINARY ARTS, BUT THE ABSENCE OF A MAIN COURSE AFTER A SERIES OF APPETIZERS IS QUITE PECULIAR.
I DOUBT IF IT HAS THE SHEER POWER TO COMPETE HEAD-ON WITH FRENCH CUISINE!
.....

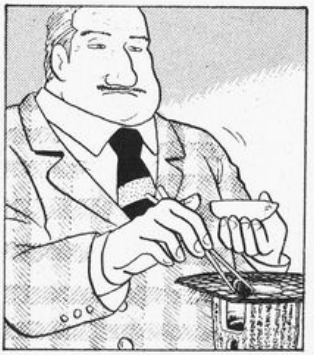
THIS HERE IS MATSUTAKE, REVERED AS THE PINNACLE OF DELICIOUSNESS IN JAPAN. THE KING OF MUSHROOMS, IF YOU WILL.
MAKE SURE TO SAVOR THIS AROMA TO THE FULLEST. IT'S A TRULY ENTRANCING FRAGRANCE.



AH... THE FRAGRANCE OF NOBILITY...

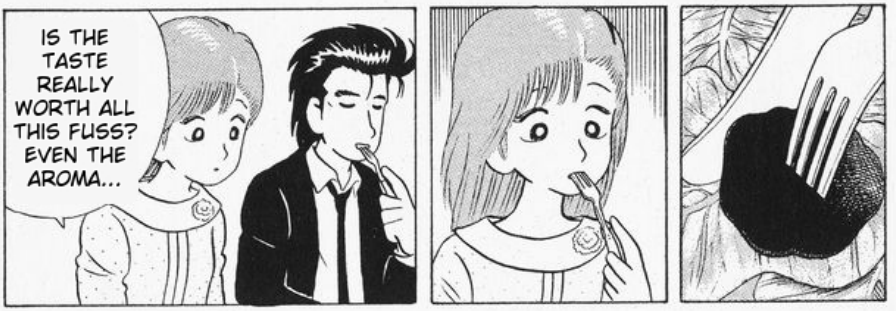


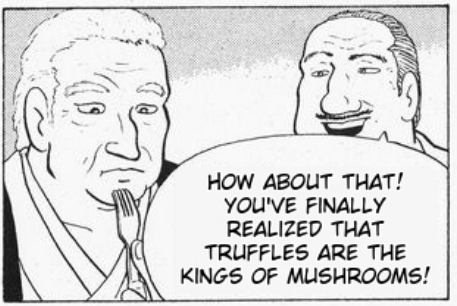

THESE ARE AUTHENTIC MATSUTAKE MUSHROOMS SOURCED ALL THE WAY FROM KYOTO. YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY ENJOY THIS KIND OF DELICACY WITH THE DRIED-OUT, SECOND-RATE ONES.
WHAT A DELIGHTFUL SCENT! AND SO EXQUISITELY DELICIOUS!

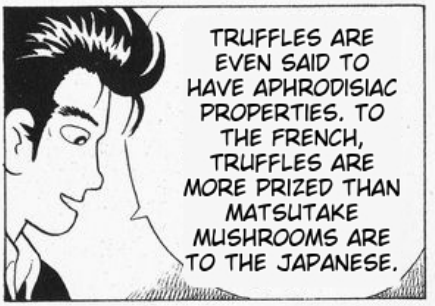


WHEN IT COMES TO FRAGRANCE AND TASTE, THERE MAY BE NO OTHER MUSHROOM AS SPLENDID AS THIS ONE.
WELL, SHOBAN, DID YOU ENJOY IT?
SHOBAN, ARE YOU ALSO DEFEATED BY THIS MATSUTAKE?
WELL, THIS ISN'T A TERMITE, SO FINDING AN APPETITE IN SUCH A SMELL IS QUITE AMUSING. THIS ISN'T A GOOD SMELL; IT'S A FOUL STENCH, ISN'T IT!
Y-YOU IMPERTINENT... ARE YOU TREATING US LIKE TERMITES?
TO THINK THIS IS THE KING OF MUSHROOMS IS RATHER COMICAL!
THE SCENT, THE SCENT, THEY SAY, BUT THIS IS A PECULIAR MIX OF THE SMELL OF SAWDUST AND MOLD. NOT EXACTLY AN APPETIZING FRAGRANCE, IF YOU ASK ME! IT'S NOT A PLEASANT AROMA, IT'S MORE LIKE A FOUL STENCH!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
WELL, I MUST SAY, I FIND THE MATSUTAKE SCENT TO BE SO ENCHANTING!
THE SMELL OF SAWDUST AND MOLD?
DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE THE SCENT OF MATSUTAKE?

HEY, 'OISHINBO' VOLUME 5.


IS THE TASTE REALLY WORTH ALL THIS FUSS? EVEN THE AROMA...

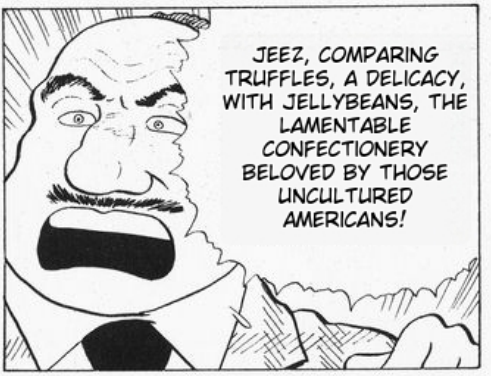

HOW ABOUT THAT! YOU'VE FINALLY REALIZED THAT TRUFFLES ARE THE KINGS OF MUSHROOMS!

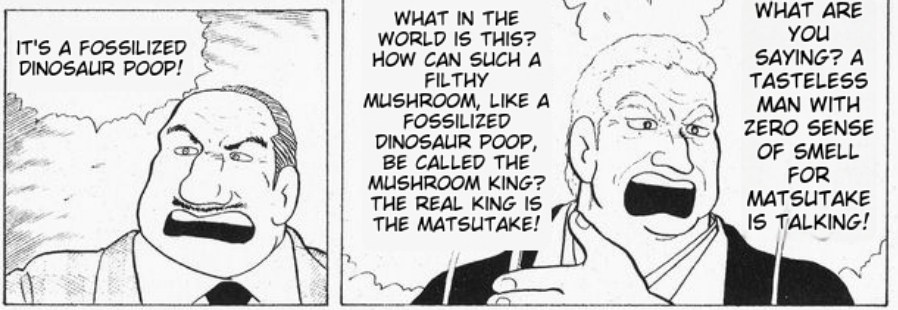

TRUFFLES ARE EVEN SAID TO HAVE APHRODISIAC PROPERTIES. TO THE FRENCH, TRUFFLES ARE MORE PRIZED THAN MATSUTAKE MUSHROOMS ARE TO THE JAPANESE.

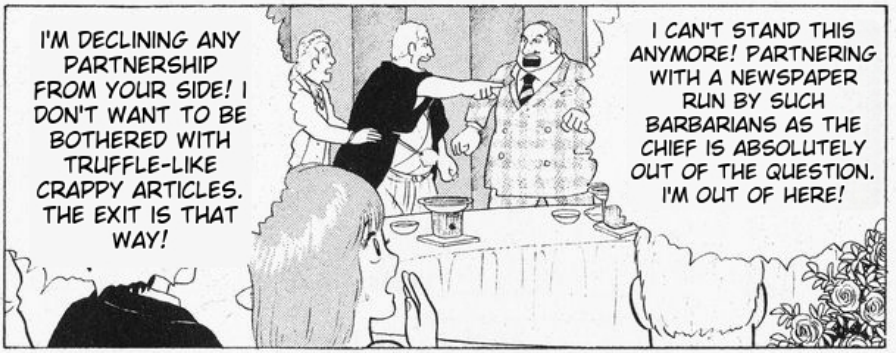
WELL, THE TASTE ISN'T ANYTHING TO WRITE HOME ABOUT, AND THE TEXTURE IS LIKE JELLYBEANS. WHY ON EARTH ARE THEY CALLED THE KINGS OF MUSHROOMS?
WHAT!?

IS THERE SUPPOSED TO BE A SCENT TO THIS? I SHOULD BE SENSITIVE TO AROMAS, BUT I CAN'T DETECT ANYTHING...

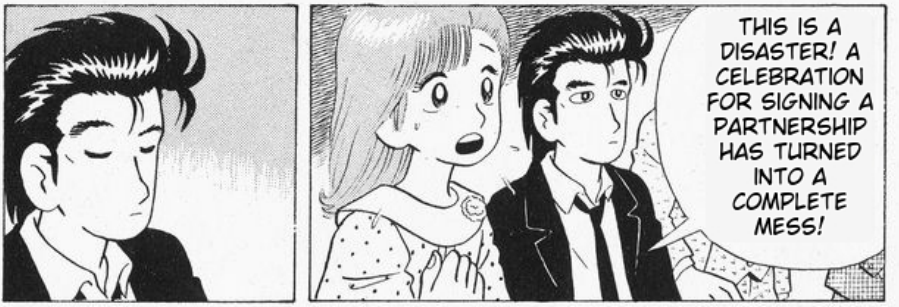
OH MY GOODNESS! SHARING A TABLE WITH SOMEONE WHO CAN'T APPRECIATE THE AROMA OR TASTE OF TRUFFLES!

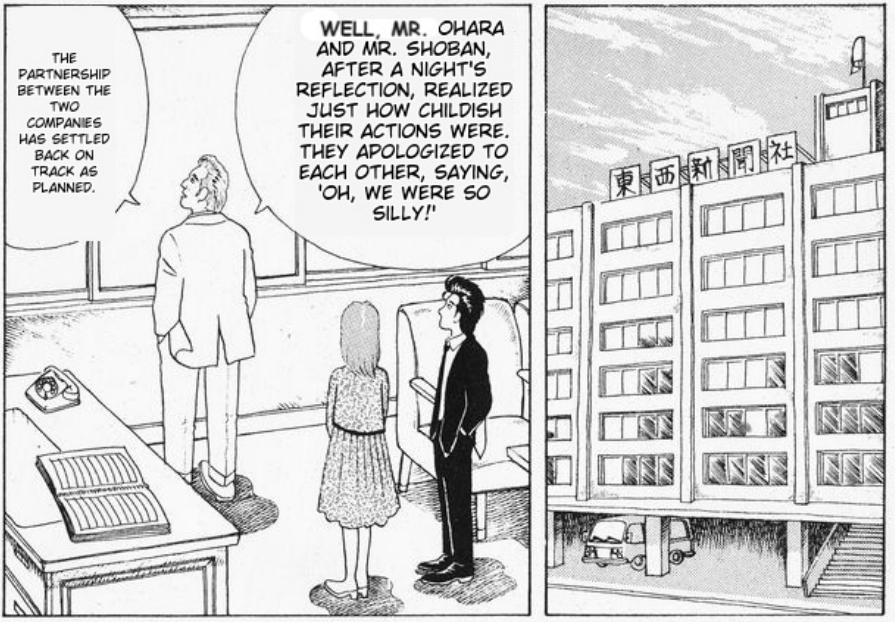

JEEZ, COMPARING TRUFFLES, A DELICACY, WITH JELLYBEANS, THE LAMENTABLE CONFECTIONERY BELOVED BY THOSE UNCULTURED AMERICANS!

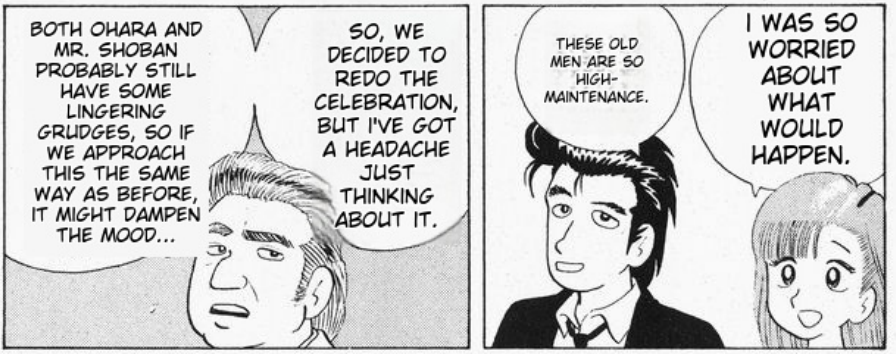

IT'S A FOSSILIZED DINOSAUR POOP!
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS THIS? HOW CAN SUCH A FILTHY MUSHROOM, LIKE A FOSSILIZED DINOSAUR POOP, BE CALLED THE MUSHROOM KING? THE REAL KING IS THE MATSUTAKE!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? A TASTELESS MAN WITH ZERO SENSE OF SMELL FOR MATSUTAKE IS TALKING!

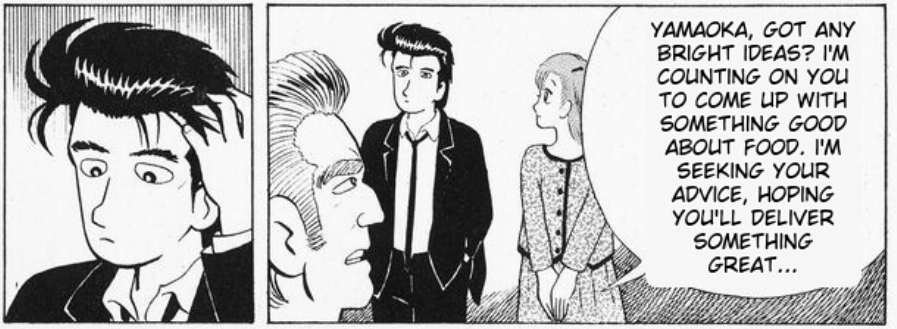

I'M DECLINING ANY PARTNERSHIP FROM YOUR SIDE! I DON'T WANT TO BE BOTHERED WITH TRUFFLE-LIKE CRAPPY ARTICLES. THE EXIT IS THAT WAY!
I CAN'T STAND THIS ANYMORE! PARTNERING WITH A NEWSPAPER RUN BY SUCH BARBARIANS AS THE CHIEF IS ABSOLUTELY OUT OF THE QUESTION. I'M OUT OF HERE!

CH-CHIEF!
ARGH, JUST LEAVE IT BE! THEY'RE THE ONES STARTING A FIGHT!

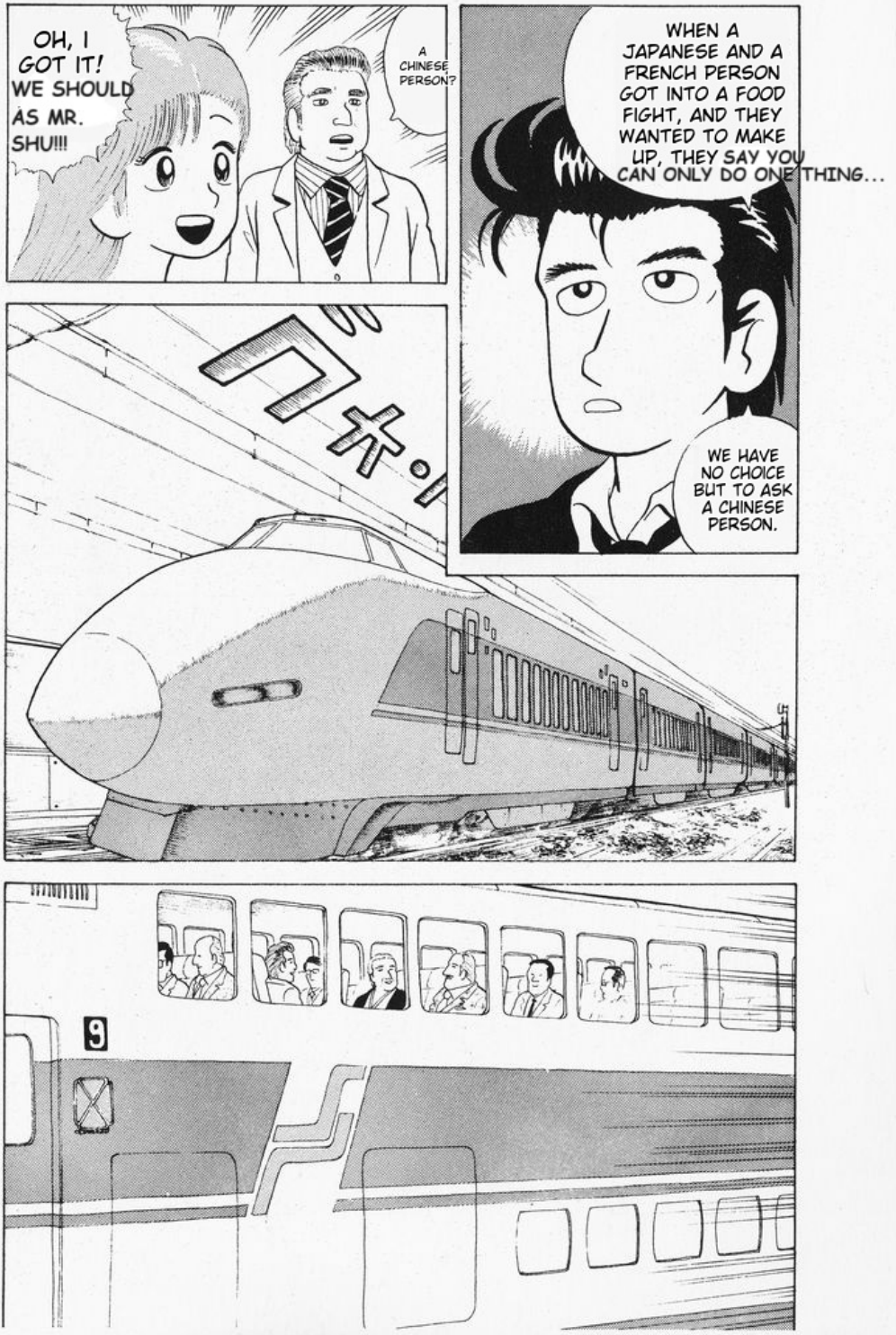

THIS IS A DISASTER! A CELEBRATION FOR SIGNING A PARTNERSHIP HAS TURNED INTO A COMPLETE MESS!

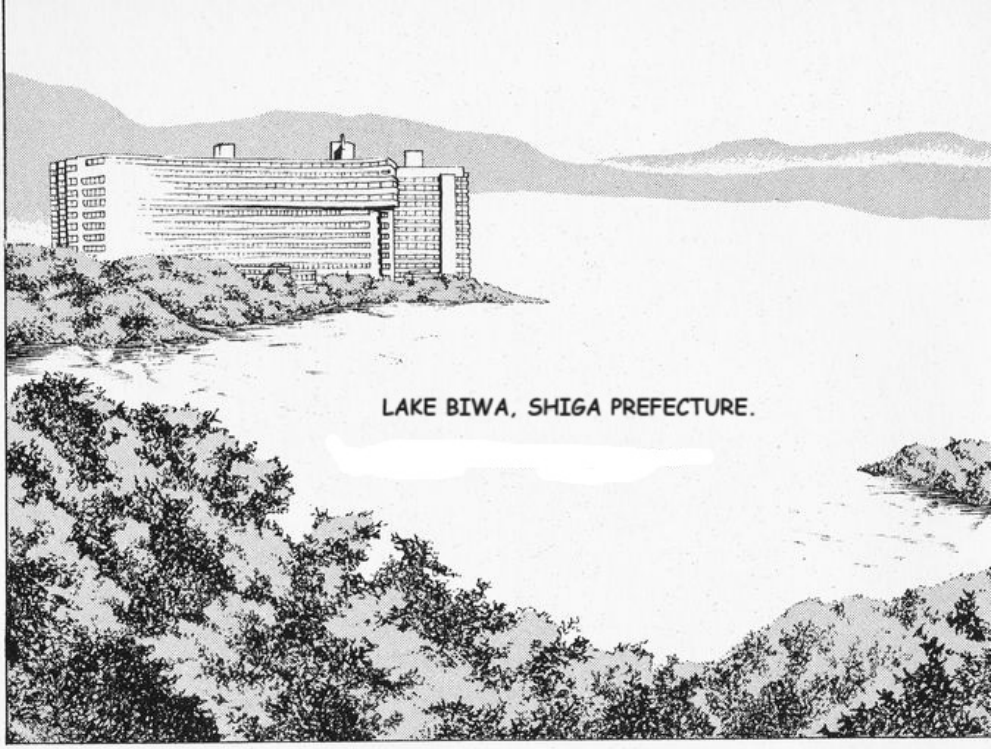

THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COMPANIES HAS SETTLED BACK ON TRACK AS PLANNED.
WELL, MR. OHARA AND MR. SHOBAN, AFTER A NIGHT'S REFLECTION, REALIZED JUST HOW CHILDISH THEIR ACTIONS WERE. THEY APOLOGIZED TO EACH OTHER, SAYING, 'OH, WE WERE SO SILLY!'
東西対開社


BOTH OHARA AND MR. SHOBAN PROBABLY STILL HAVE SOME LINGERING GRUDGES, SO IF WE APPROACH THIS THE SAME WAY AS BEFORE, IT MIGHT DAMPEN THE MOOD...
SO, WE DECIDED TO REDO THE CELEBRATION, BUT I'VE GOT A HEADACHE JUST THINKING ABOUT IT.
THESE OLD MEN ARE SO HIGH-MAINTENANCE.
I WAS SO WORRIED ABOUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN.

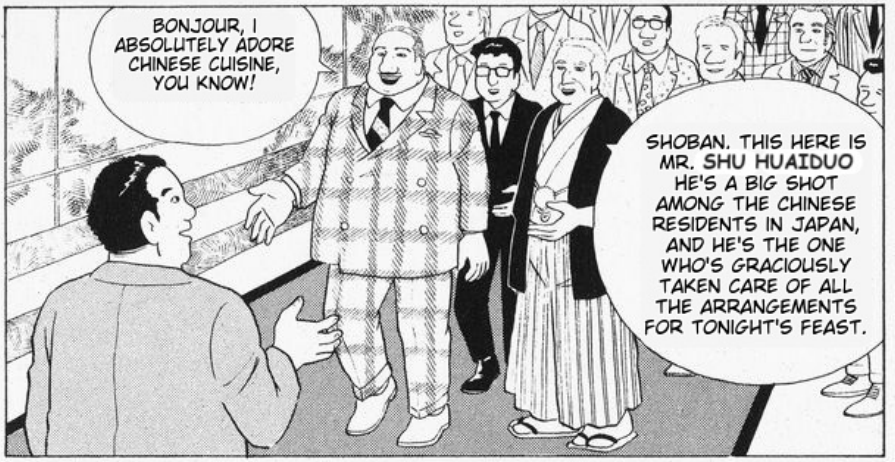

YAMAOKA, GOT ANY BRIGHT IDEAS? I'M COUNTING ON YOU TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING GOOD ABOUT FOOD. I'M SEEKING YOUR ADVICE, HOPING YOU'LL DELIVER SOMETHING GREAT...

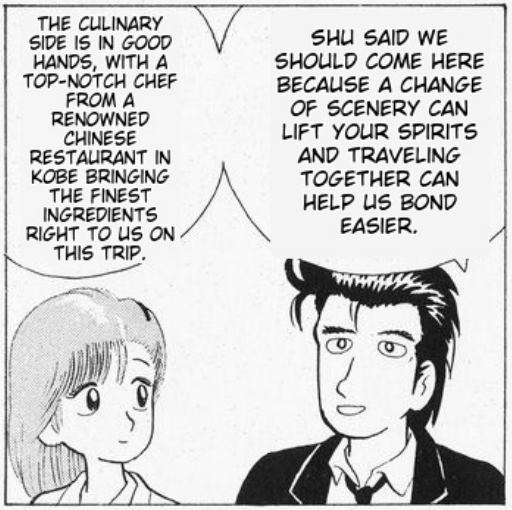
HEY, 'OISHINBO'
VOLUME 5.



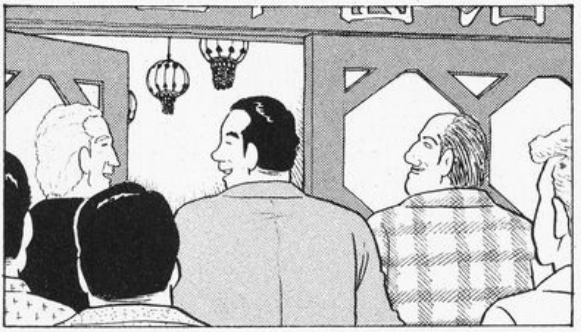

LAKE BIWA, SHIGA PREFECTURE.

於仁翠園酒楼
WELCOME, I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.

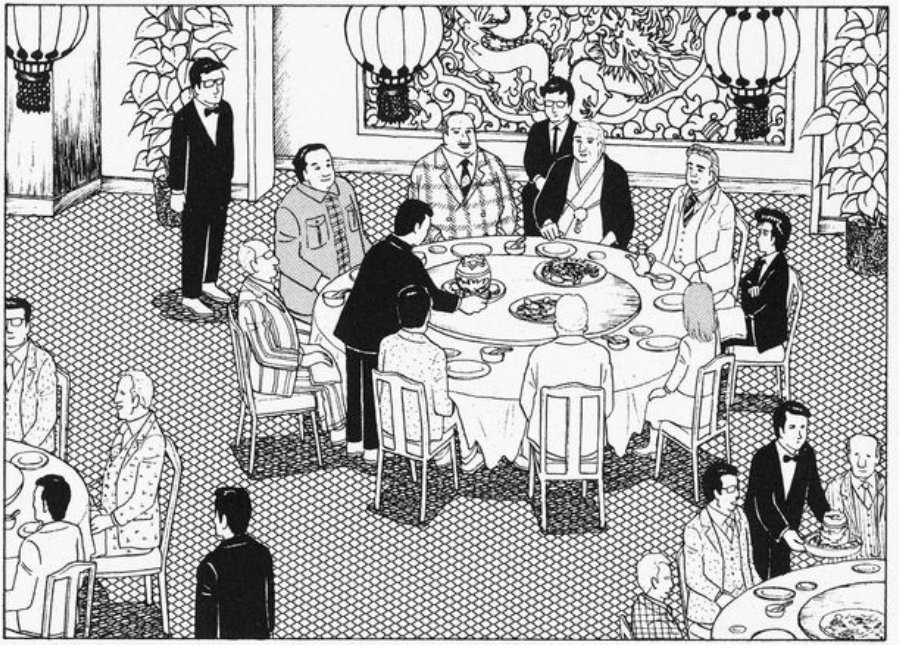

BONJOUR, I ABSOLUTELY ADORE CHINESE CUISINE, YOU KNOW!
SHOBAN. THIS HERE IS MR. SHU HUAIDUO HE'S A BIG SHOT AMONG THE CHINESE RESIDENTS IN JAPAN, AND HE'S THE ONE WHO'S GRACIOUSLY TAKEN CARE OF ALL THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR TONIGHT'S FEAST.

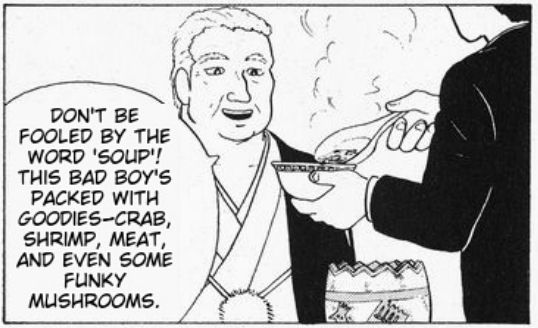

THE CULINARY SIDE IS IN GOOD HANDS, WITH A TOP-NOTCH CHEF FROM A RENOWNED CHINESE RESTAURANT IN KOBE BRINGING THE FINEST INGREDIENTS RIGHT TO US ON THIS TRIP.
SHU SAID WE SHOULD COME HERE BECAUSE A CHANGE OF SCENERY CAN LIFT YOUR SPIRITS AND TRAVELING TOGETHER CAN HELP US BOND EASIER.

BUT IS IT REALLY OKAY TO BRING THEM ALL THE WAY OUT HERE? WHAT IF THE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN OHARA-SHACHO AND MR. SHOBAN DOESN'T GO SMOOTHLY...



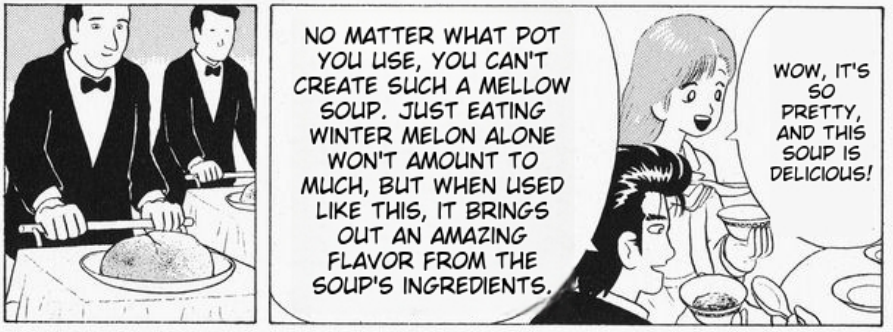
I HOPE THEY CAN MAKE UP NICELY...
HMM...

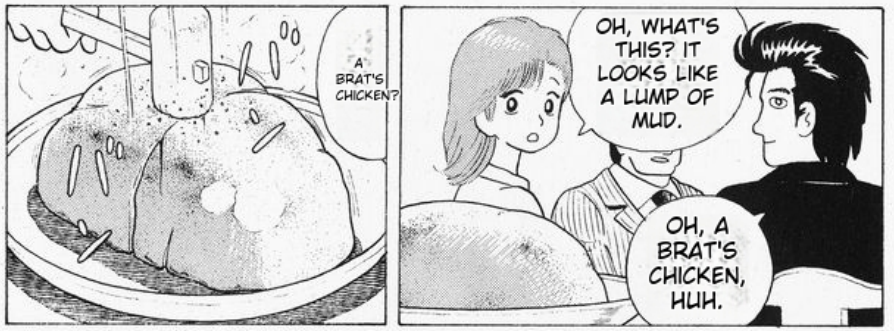


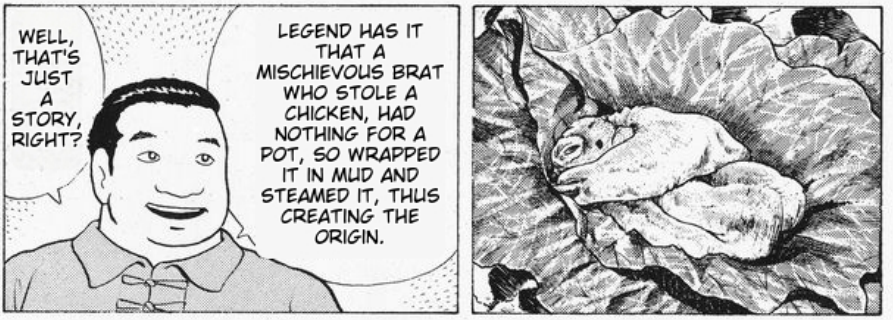

DON'T BE FOOLED BY THE WORD 'SOUP'! THIS BAD BOY'S PACKED WITH GOODIES—CRAB, SHRIMP, MEAT, AND EVEN SOME FUNKY MUSHROOMS.

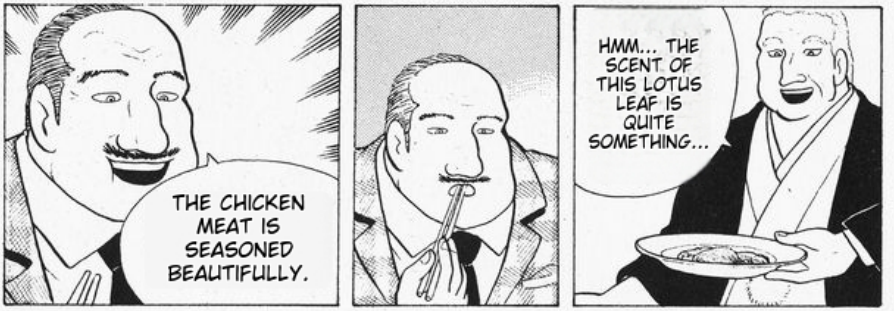
THIS IS A DISH WHERE WINTER MELON IS STEAMED WITH SOUP INSIDE.

DON'T FORGET, YOU CAN EAT THE WINTER MELON TOO, YOU KNOW!
TRES BIEN!!!


NO MATTER WHAT POT YOU USE, YOU CAN'T CREATE SUCH A MELLOW SOUP. JUST EATING WINTER MELON ALONE WON'T AMOUNT TO MUCH, BUT WHEN USED LIKE THIS, IT BRINGS OUT AN AMAZING FLAVOR FROM THE SOUP'S INGREDIENTS.
WOW, IT'S SO PRETTY, AND THIS SOUP IS DELICIOUS!


A BRAT'S CHICKEN?
OH, WHAT'S THIS? IT LOOKS LIKE A LUMP OF MUD.
OH, A BRAT'S CHICKEN, HUH.


WELL, THAT'S JUST A STORY, RIGHT?
LEGEND HAS IT THAT A MISCHIEVOUS BRAT WHO STOLE A CHICKEN, HAD NOTHING FOR A POT, SO WRAPPED IT IN MUD AND STEAMED IT, THUS CREATING THE ORIGIN.

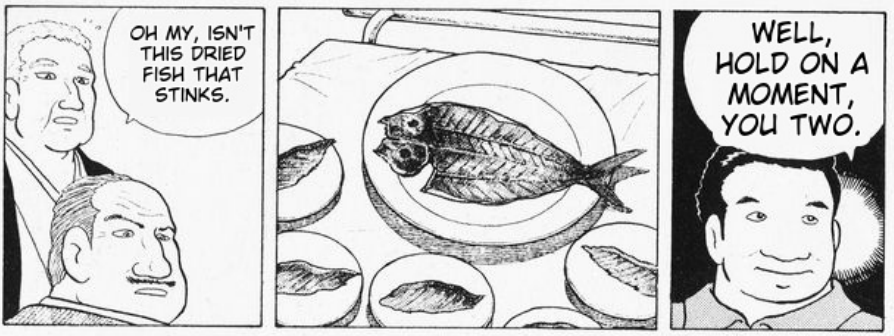

THE CHICKEN MEAT IS SEASONED BEAUTIFULLY.
HMM... THE SCENT OF THIS LOTUS LEAF IS QUITE SOMETHING...

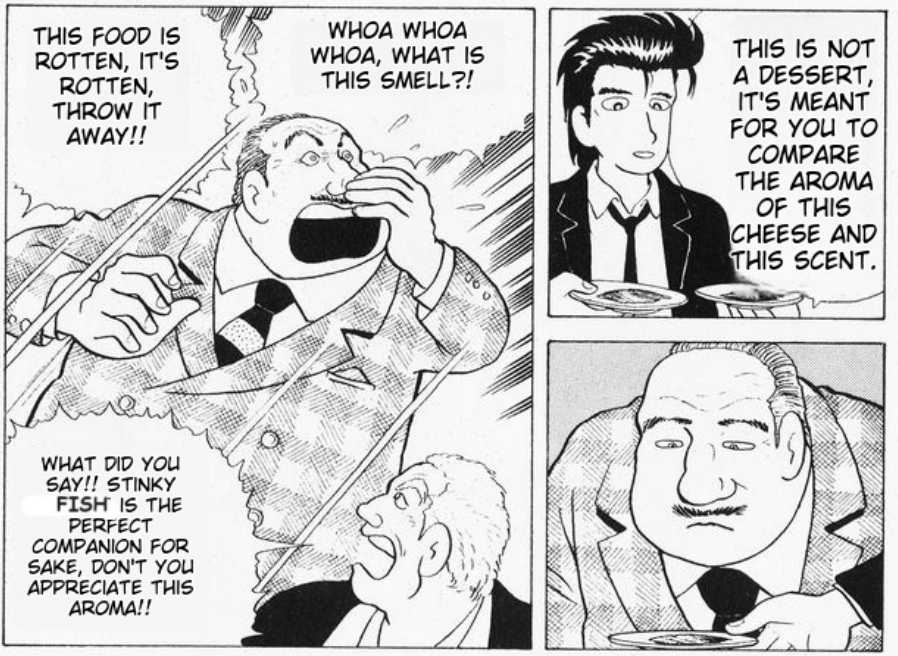
OH, WHAT IS THIS?
IT'S EEL, A DIFFERENT KIND FROM THE GRILLED EEL YOU FIND IN JAPAN. IT'S ALSO KNOWN AS 'UNAGI,' WITH A YELLOWISH HUE TO ITS BODY.
I SEE, SO SOUND IS PART OF TASTE TOO, AND THE AROMA THAT RISES WHEN THE OIL IS POURED IS DELIGHTFUL. AMAZING!
WELL, WELL, WELL!
WOW, WHAT AN INCREDIBLE SOUND!
AS A FINISHING TOUCH, WE POUR SIZZLING HOT OIL IN FRONT OF OUR CUSTOMERS. ISN'T IT A FANTASTIC SOUND? IN CHINESE CUISINE, SOUND IS PART OF THE DINING EXPERIENCE.
ENJOYING THE SOUND ENHANCES THE AROMA... WHAT A BRILLIANT IDEA.

……
I WONDER IF IT'S OKAY, DRAGGING OURSELVES OUT TO A PLACE LIKE THIS... WAS IT WORTH IT?
WELL, SOMEHOW.
EVERY DISH IS ABSOLUTELY SPLENDID. EVEN MR. SHOBAN SEEMS PLEASED. BUT I DOUBT ALL THE TENSION HAS COMPLETELY MELTED AWAY.
IN FRENCH CUISINE, THEY EAT CHEESE FOR DESSERT. BUT AFTER TODAY'S MEAL, WHAT KIND OF CHEESE WOULD BE GOOD, I WONDER?
は
NOW, IT'S ABOUT TIME TO SWITCH TO DESSERTS.
I SEE. WELL THEN, HOW ABOUT THIS?
YEAH, TODAY'S MENU WAS LOADED WITH RICH DISHES LIKE DUCK, PORK, PIGEON, AND EEL. SO, IF WE'RE EATING MORE LATER, A PUNGENT CHEESE WOULD BE PERFECT.

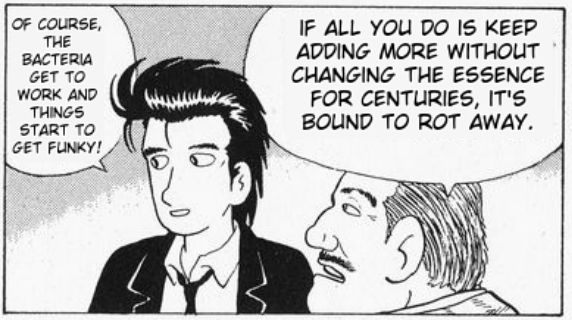
OH! IF IT ISN'T RIBARO! CUT ME A GENEROUS SLICE, WILL YA?
SURE THING.
HMM?
OH, LOOKS LIKE IT'S PERFECTLY AGED FOR CONSUMPTION. HM, THE AROMA OF THIS CHEESE IS...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, THE AROMA OF THIS CHEESE IS PERFECT?!
NO... HOW SHOULD I PUT THIS...
W-WHOA!! WHAT IS THIS SMELL?!
WHAT A TURN OF EVENTS! JUST WHEN WE WERE STARTING TO RECONCILE, NOW WE'RE BACK TO SQUARE ONE...

OH, IT'S 'OISHINBO 5'!



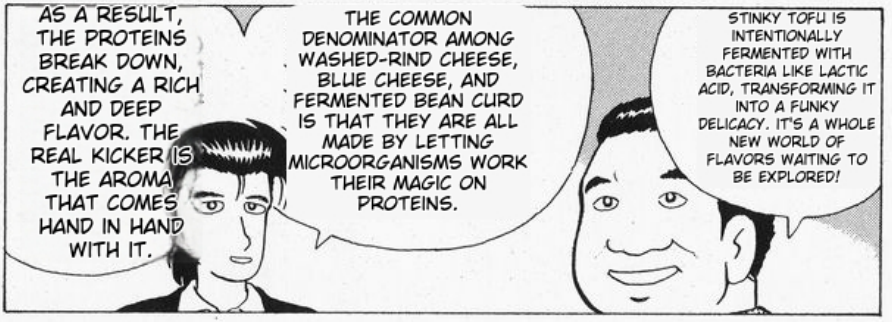


WHAT WE FIND TO BE A DELIGHTFUL AROMA, CAN BE PERCEIVED AS A FOUL STENCH BY OTHERS. CHINA HAS ITS FAIR SHARE OF SUCH ITEMS TOO.
F-F-FERTILIZER!
THIS IS CALLED 'FURU,' MADE BY FERMENTING TOFU. WE USE IT AS A SEASONING. ONCE YOU GET A TASTE OF THIS, YOU'LL BE HOOKED, GUARANTEED.
WHOA, THE SMELL IS INTENSE!
WHAT'S THAT FOR?
THE CHEESE I JUST SERVED IS A WASHED-RIND TYPE, WHERE DURING AGING, THE SURFACE IS WASHED WITH WINE. THIS PROCESS GIVES IT A UNIQUE CHARACTER.
HMM...
HMM...
ON THE OTHER HAND, CHEESES LIKE LIVAROT OR PONT-L'ÉVÊQUE INTENTIONALLY ENCOURAGE THE GROWTH OF BREVIBACTERIUM LINENS BY WASHING THE SURFACE WITH WINE, PROVIDING JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF MOISTURE. THIS BACTERIUM TRANSFORMS THE SURFACE INTO A BROWN, STICKY TEXTURE, CREATING THAT INTENSE AROMA.
VARIOUS BACTERIA ADHERE TO THE SURFACE OF CHEESE. BREVIBACTERIUM LINENS, IN FACT, IS THE BACTERIUM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PUNGENT AROMA OF THE CHEESE I JUST SERVED. HOWEVER, FOR CHEESES LIKE EMMENTAL OR GRUYÈRE THAT DO NOT WANT THIS AROMA, THE SURFACE IS WIPED DAILY TO PREVENT THE GROWTH OF THESE BACTERIA.


OF COURSE, THE BACTERIA GET TO WORK AND THINGS START TO GET FUNKY!
IF ALL YOU DO IS KEEP ADDING MORE WITHOUT CHANGING THE ESSENCE FOR CENTURIES, IT'S BOUND TO ROT AWAY.

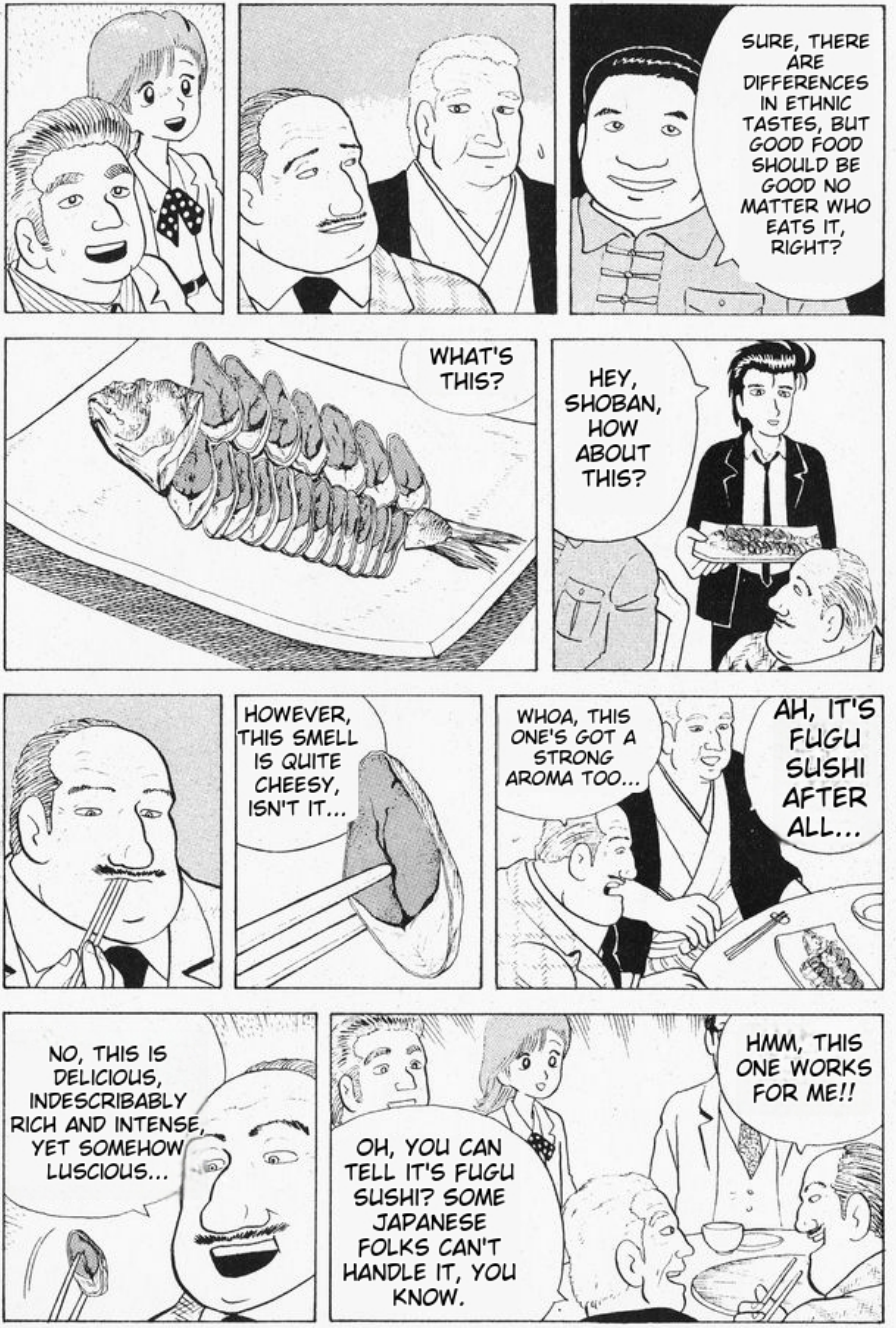
AS FOR THE KUSAYA, BEFORE DRYING, IT'S SOAKED IN A BRINE. THIS BRINE IS A MIXTURE OF SALTWATER INFUSED WITH FISH ESSENCE, SOME SAY THEY EVEN INCLUDE THE FISH OFFAL DEPENDING ON THE REGION.
THE SECRET SAUCE IS REPLENISHED AS IT DIMINISHES, FOLLOWING THE TRADITION OF EDO PERIOD WHERE ITS ESSENCE REMAINS UNTAINTED AND UNEXPOSED.

THAT'S THE SOURCE OF THIS PUNGENT SMELL OF DURIAN. BUT HEY, IT PACKS A PUNCH BY KILLING HARMFUL BACTERIA. BY APPLYING ITS ESSENCE, IT PREVENTS DECAY CAUSED BY OTHER GERMS AND ENHANCES THE FLAVOR. THAT'S THE SECRET TO ITS MAGIC SAUCE.

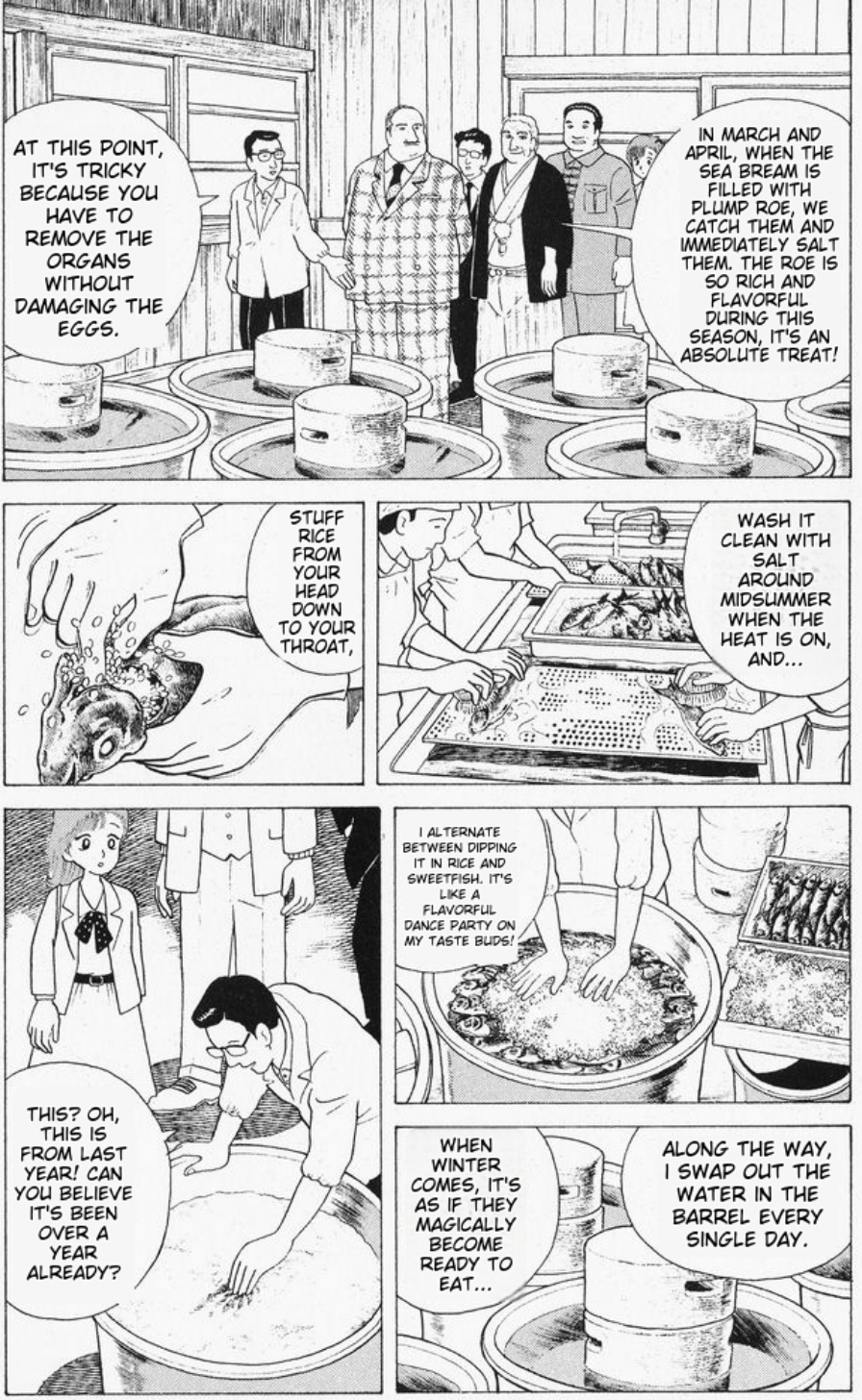

AS A RESULT, THE PROTEINS BREAK DOWN, CREATING A RICH AND DEEP FLAVOR. THE REAL KICKER IS THE AROMA THAT COMES HAND IN HAND WITH IT.
THE COMMON DENOMINATOR AMONG WASHED-RIND CHEESE, BLUE CHEESE, AND FERMENTED BEAN CURD IS THAT THEY ARE ALL MADE BY LETTING MICROORGANISMS WORK THEIR MAGIC ON PROTEINS.
STINKY TOFU IS INTENTIONALLY FERMENTED WITH BACTERIA LIKE LACTIC ACID, TRANSFORMING IT INTO A FUNKY DELICACY. IT'S A WHOLE NEW WORLD OF FLAVORS WAITING TO BE EXPLORED!

COME TO THINK OF IT, THE SMELL OF LIVER AND STINKY TOFU IS JUST THE BREAKDOWN OF PROTEINS, YET SAYING YOU CAN'T EAT FOODS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES BECAUSE OF THEIR UNPLEASANT ODOR IS A CHILDISH AND FOOLISH NOTION!

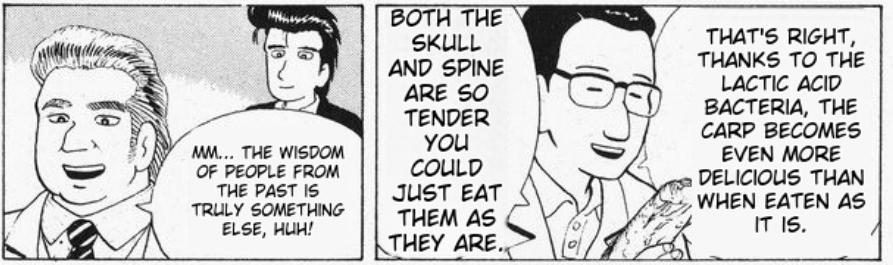
ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO FOREIGN STUFF.
I GET IT NOW! ONCE YOU GET A TASTE, YOU'RE HOOKED! BUT SOMETIMES, THAT TANTALIZING AROMA BECOMES A HURDLE, PREVENTING YOU FROM SAVORING THE DELICIOUSNESS THAT'S RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU.


SURE, THERE ARE DIFFERENCES IN ETHNIC TASTES, BUT GOOD FOOD SHOULD BE GOOD NO MATTER WHO EATS IT, RIGHT?
WHAT'S THIS?
HEY, SHOBAN, HOW ABOUT THIS?
HOWEVER, THIS SMELL IS QUITE CHEESY, ISN'T IT...
WHOA, THIS ONE'S GOT A STRONG AROMA TOO...
AH, IT'S FUGU SUSHI AFTER ALL...
NO, THIS IS DELICIOUS, INDESCRIBABLY RICH AND INTENSE, YET SOMEHOW LUSCIOUS...
OH, YOU CAN TELL IT'S FUGU SUSHI? SOME JAPANESE FOLKS CAN'T HANDLE IT, YOU KNOW.
HMM, THIS ONE WORKS FOR ME!!

OH, IT'S 'OISHINBO 5'!


AT THIS POINT, IT'S TRICKY BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO REMOVE THE ORGANS WITHOUT DAMAGING THE EGGS.
IN MARCH AND APRIL, WHEN THE SEA BREAM IS FILLED WITH PLUMP ROE, WE CATCH THEM AND IMMEDIATELY SALT THEM. THE ROE IS SO RICH AND FLAVORFUL DURING THIS SEASON, IT'S AN ABSOLUTE TREAT!
STUFF RICE FROM YOUR HEAD DOWN TO YOUR THROAT,
WASH IT CLEAN WITH SALT AROUND MIDSUMMER WHEN THE HEAT IS ON, AND...
THIS? OH, THIS IS FROM LAST YEAR! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT'S BEEN OVER A YEAR ALREADY?
I ALTERNATE BETWEEN DIPPING IT IN RICE AND SWEETFISH. IT'S LIKE A FLAVORFUL DANCE PARTY ON MY TASTE BUDS!
WHEN WINTER COMES, IT'S AS IF THEY MAGICALLY BECOME READY TO EAT...
ALONG THE WAY, I SWAP OUT THE WATER IN THE BARREL EVERY SINGLE DAY.

IT'S THE AROMA OF LACTIC ACID BACTERIA, YOU KNOW! EVEN CHEESE IS CRAFTED WITH THE MIGHTY POWER OF LACTIC ACID BACTERIA.
I CAN SMELL A DELIGHTFUL FRAGRANCE WAFTING THROUGH THE AIR. AH, WHAT A TREAT.
FUNA SUSHI IS ONE OF THE MANY TYPES OF NAREZUSHI. ORIGINALLY MEANT FOR PRESERVING FISH, SO FEAR NOT, IT WON'T GO STALE OR STINKY ON YOU!
WOW... DOESN'T IT STINK?

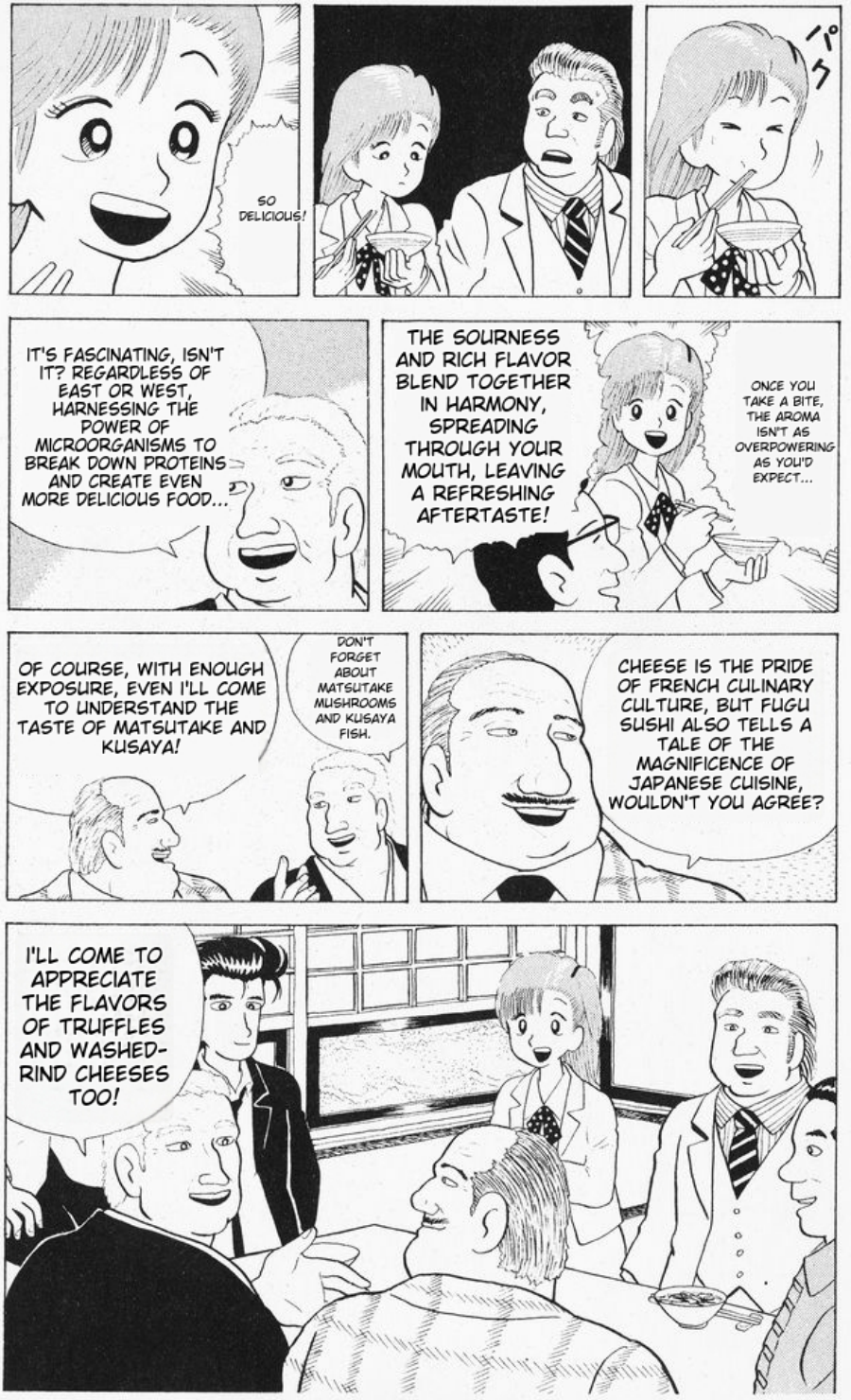

MM... THE WISDOM OF PEOPLE FROM THE PAST IS TRULY SOMETHING ELSE, HUH!
BOTH THE SKULL AND SPINE ARE SO TENDER YOU COULD JUST EAT THEM AS THEY ARE.
THAT'S RIGHT, THANKS TO THE LACTIC ACID BACTERIA, THE CARP BECOMES EVEN MORE DELICIOUS THAN WHEN EATEN AS IT IS.

WOW! I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT CARP SUSHI WAS JUST A SIDE DISH FOR SAKE.
OH, OCHAZUKE!

HAVE YOU EVER TRIED THE DELICIOUS, MOUTH-WATERING FLAVORS OF A SWEETFISH SUSHI TEA RICE BOWL?

THE FRAGRANCE OF TEA MIXING WITH THE AROMA OF GRILLED FISH SUSHI IS QUITE INTRIGUING...
THE TRICK IS TO MIX THE GRILLED FISH SUSHI WITH THE RICE.
WELL, I'M SURPRISED!
WOW, THIS IS QUITE A DELICACY.
MISS, DON'T WORRY. EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN TASTES, SO FEEL FREE TO LEAVE IT IF IT'S TOO MUCH FOR YOU.
N-NO, THANK YOU, I'LL HAVE SOME.
I'VE BEEN OVERWHELMED BY THE STRONG SCENTS OF CHEESE AND FISH SINCE EARLIER, AND I'M STARTING TO FEEL A BIT DIZZY...
I ACTUALLY CAN'T STAND THIS SCENT... IT'S MY FIRST TIME EXPERIENCING IT...
OH, BUT I...
HEY, YOU, GO AHEAD AND EAT. IT'S RUDE NOT TO.
OH, CHIEF...

OH, IT'S 'OISHINBO 5'!



NOT AT ALL... THANKS TO MR. SHU.
IT SEEMS EVERYONE IS FOLLOWING YOUR LEAD. YOUNG ONE, YOU HAVE OUR GRATITUDE.
NOW WE CAN FORM A PARTNERSHIP WITHOUT ANY RESERVATIONS.
OUR CULINARY HORIZONS HAVE CERTAINLY EXPANDED, HAVEN'T THEY?
.....
OH MY, LOOKS LIKE THERE'S STILL SOMEONE LAGGING BEHIND.

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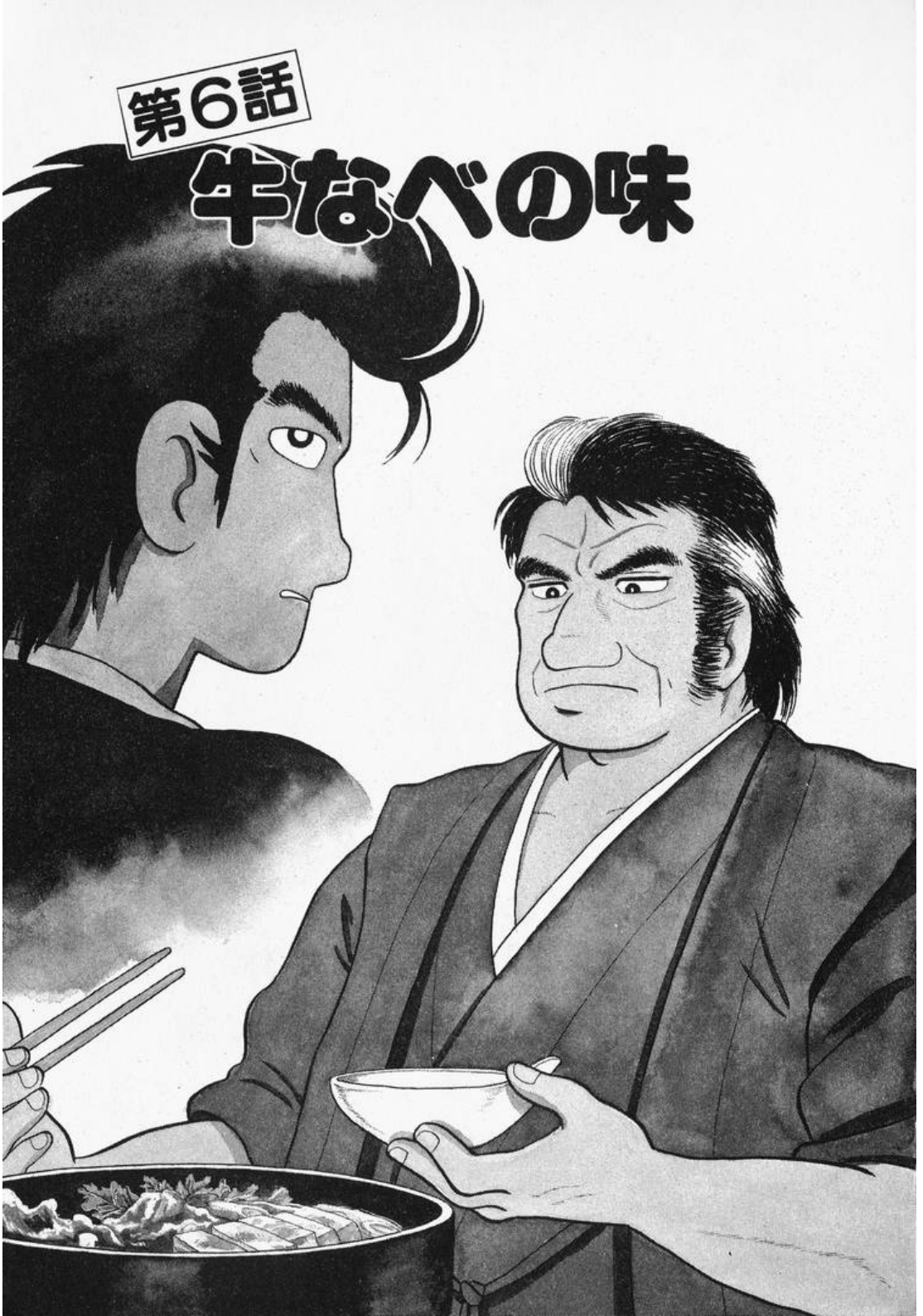

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THE AFRICAN POET, MR. AMALJA, AND HIS WIFE HAVE GRACED US WITH THEIR PRESENCE IN JAPAN, SO THE EAST-WEST NEWSPAPER'S CULTURE DEPARTMENT INVITED THE ESTEEMED COUPLE TO THE TRADITIONAL SUKIYAKI RESTAURANT, 'USHIMATSU'.

OH... MY, SUKIYAKI IS KNOWN EVEN IN AFRICA.
I HAD ALWAYS WANTED TO TASTE THE REAL DEAL IN JAPAN... AND TODAY, I AM THOROUGHLY SATISFIED.

SO, HOW DO YOU FIND THE TASTE OF SUKIYAKI?

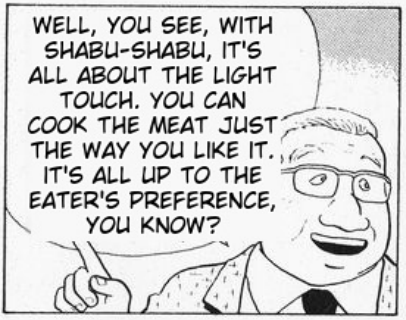
I WONDER IF THE COUPLE IS REALLY SATISFIED.
.....
WELL, KINDA...
DOESN'T THIS SKIYAKI TASTE A BIT TOO SWEET AND HEAVY?
OH, SKIYAKI HAS ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THIS AT EVERY RESTAURANT, RIGHT, MR. YAMAOKA?
INDEED, SKIYAKI IS A DISH FOR THOSE WHO DON'T UNDERSTAND THE TASTE OF MEAT!

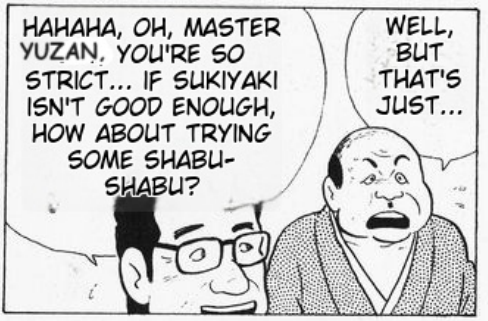
.....
THAT VOICE!?

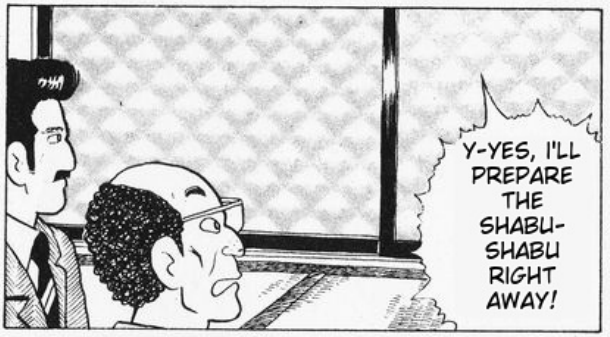
I DIDN'T COME HERE FOR THE SUKIYAKI.
DIDN'T OUR SUKIYAKI SUIT YOUR TASTE BUDS?
SENSEI KAIBARA, DID SOMETHING DISPLEASE YOU?
MAKE IT AGAIN.
Y-YES.

ジュウ
.....
SOY SAUCE, WATER, A SPLASH OF CHEAP BOOZE, LOADS OF ARTIFICIAL SEASONINGS, AND SUGAR STIRRED IN, CREATING A SICKLY SWEET AND CLOYING FLAVOR.
THE REAL ISSUE LIES IN HOW IT'S ALL MIXED TOGETHER.
UGH. THE TASTE IS TOO CLOYING!

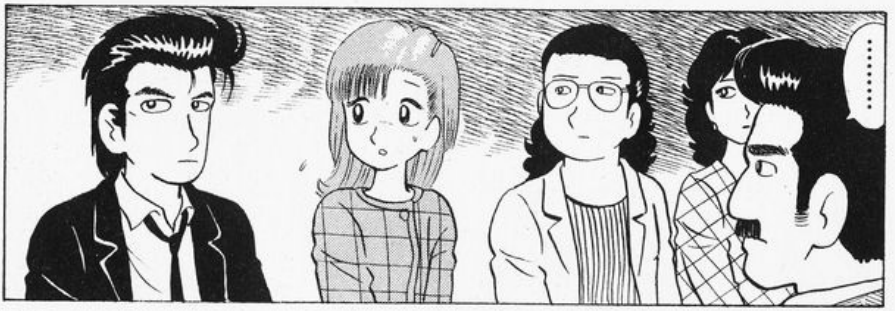
THE WAITRESS DOESN'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THE MEAT PROPERLY, OVERCOOKING IT AND RUINING THE FLAVOR. THIS IS PROBABLY THE WORST WAY TO EAT BEEF.
AND TO TOP IT OFF, DIPPING OVERCOOKED MEAT IN RAW EGG? NO MATTER HOW GOOD THE MEAT IS, THE FLAVOR JUST DISAPPEARS.


WELL, YOU SEE, WITH SHABU-SHABU, IT'S ALL ABOUT THE LIGHT TOUCH. YOU CAN COOK THE MEAT JUST THE WAY YOU LIKE IT. IT'S ALL UP TO THE EATER'S PREFERENCE, YOU KNOW?


HAHAHA, OH, MASTER YUZAN, YOU'RE SO STRICT... IF SUKIYAKI ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH, HOW ABOUT TRYING SOME SHABU-SHABU?
WELL, BUT THAT'S JUST...


Y-YES, I'LL PREPARE THE SHABU-SHABU RIGHT AWAY!

HMM... SHABU-SHABU, HUH...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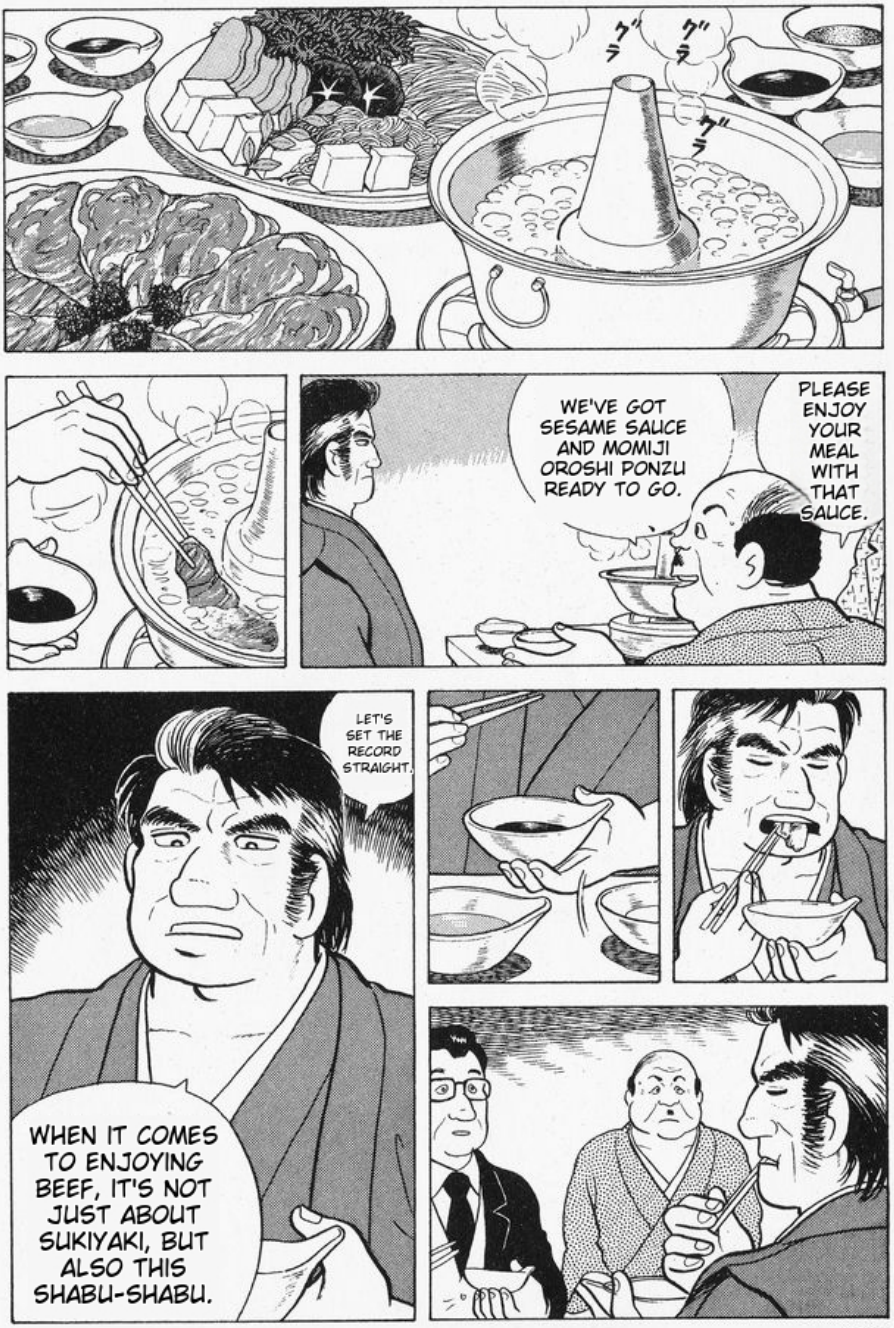
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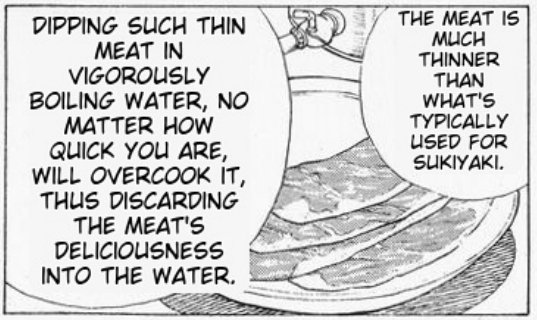
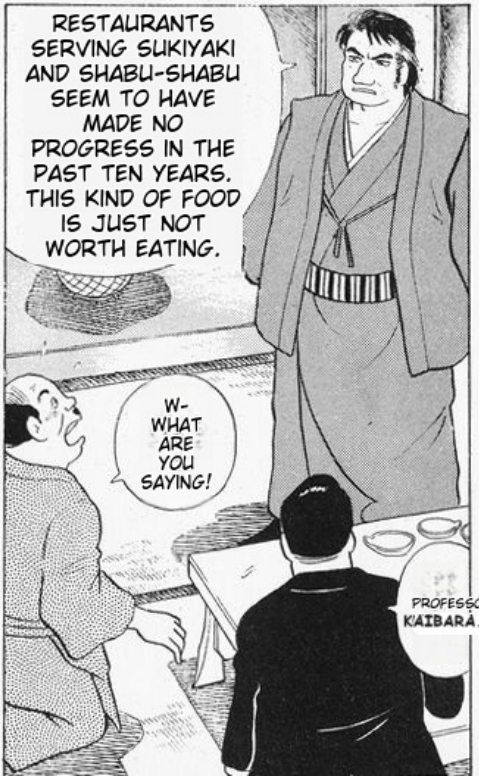
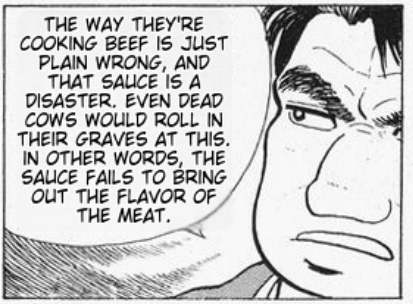
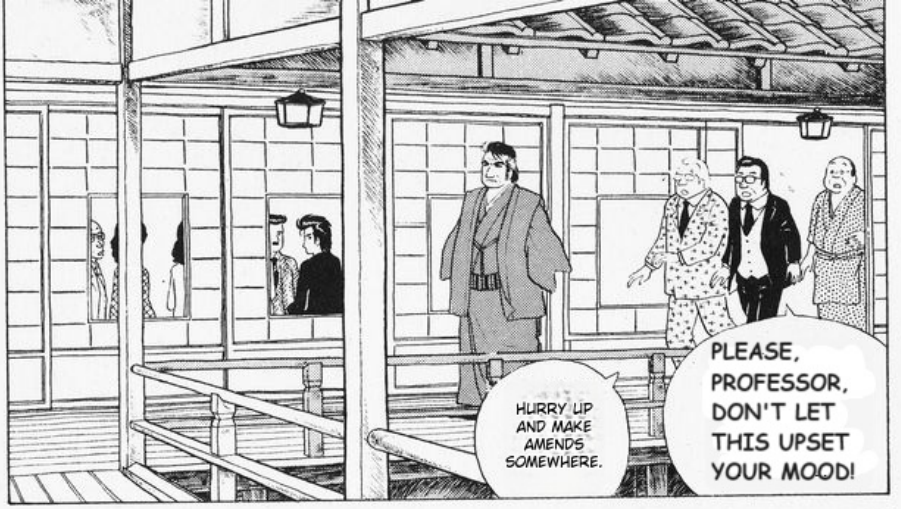
WE'VE GOT SESAME SAUCE AND MOMIJI OROSHI PONZU READY TO GO.
PLEASE ENJOY YOUR MEAL WITH THAT SAUCE.
LET'S SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT.
WHEN IT COMES TO ENJOYING BEEF, IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT SUKIYAKI, BUT ALSO THIS SHABU-SHABU.

OOH, 'OISHINBO' VOLUME 5!

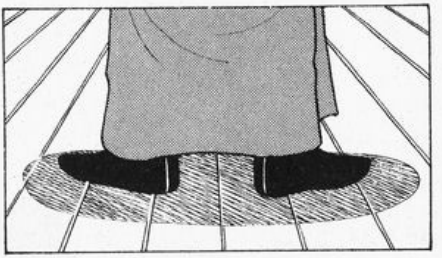


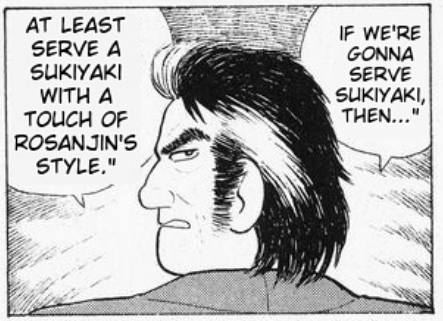





HURRY UP AND MAKE AMENDS SOMEWHERE.
PLEASE, PROFESSOR, DON'T LET THIS UPSET YOUR MOOD!

HUH? ROSANJIN-STYLE SUKIYAKI...?"

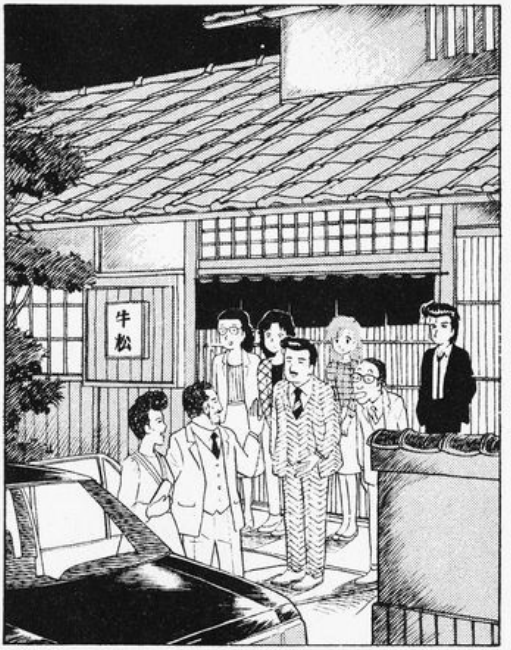



AT LEAST SERVE A SUKIYAKI WITH A TOUCH OF ROSANJIN'S STYLE."
IF WE'RE GONNA SERVE SUKIYAKI, THEN..."

WHAT'S THIS 'ROSANJIN-STYLE SUKIYAKI' ALL ABOUT?"

WELL, SEEMS LIKE WE'RE IN FOR ANOTHER SHOWDOWN WITH KAIBARA YUZAN.

TODAY, LUCK WITH CUSTOMERS AIN'T LOOKING SO GOOD, MAN.
PFFT. A PRETENTIOUS FOODIE AND HIS KOKUJIN FRIENDS...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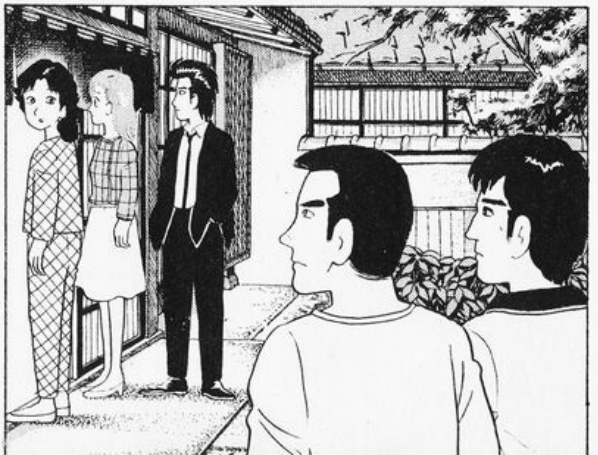
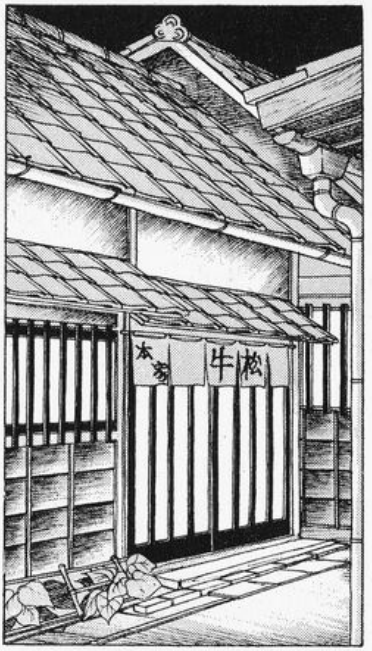
HMPH.

WHAT DID YOU SAY?
SUCH TERRIBLE RACISM! YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED!

OH, MR. MITANI!



OH, HEY THERE, NORIKO!
SO, GO AHEAD, PLAYBOY. TRY AND SUE ME!
YOU SHOULD SUE. AFTER ALL, YOU UNGRATEFUL CHILD, YOU SHOULD BE THANKING ME FOR TAKING CARE OF YOUR SENILE PARENTS INSTEAD OF ACCUSING ME OF ANYTHING!
THAT TROUBLEMAKER IS BACK AGAIN, I'LL CALL THE POLICE!!
YOU SCOUNDREL!
IT'S MY TURN TO TALK NOW!! GIVE BACK THIS LAND AND HOUSE, OR I'LL SUE YOU!!
CUT IT OUT, MATSUGAKI!!
HOLD YOUR HORSES!!

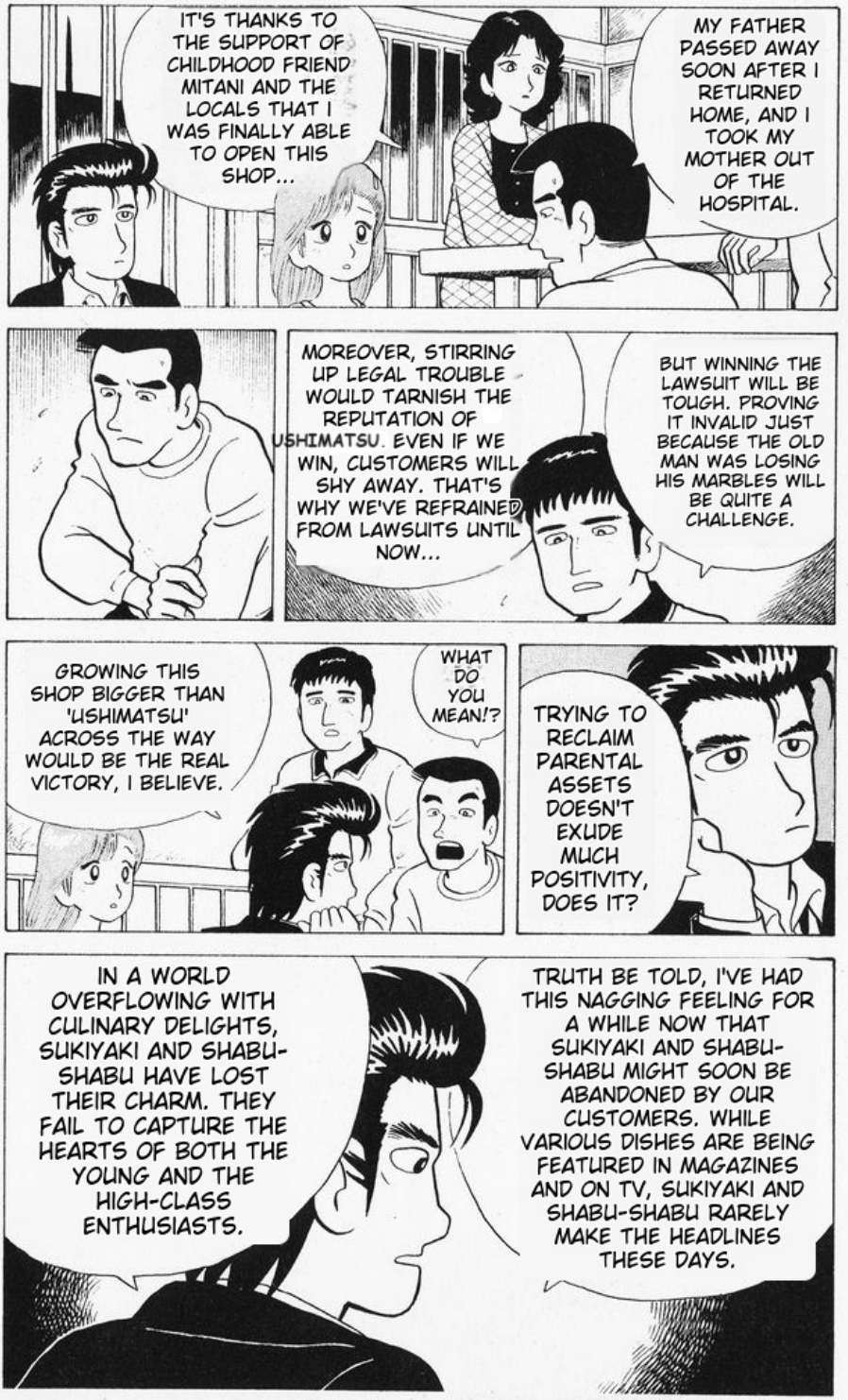


SOMEDAY, I'LL HAVE TO INHERIT THE 'USHIMATSU' SHOP, THEY SAY. BUT UNTIL THEN, I'VE BEEN GALLIVANTING ALL OVER THE WORLD, FUELED BY YOUTHFUL VIGOR...

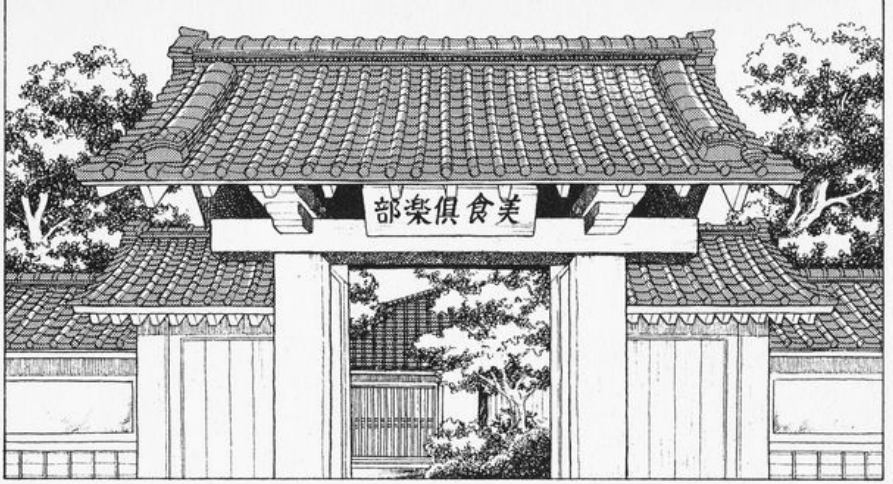
...IT'S TRUE, I WAS A PRODIGAL SON...

TAKESHITA TOOK ADVANTAGE OF MY FATHER'S SENILITY, MAKING HIM STAMP THE TRANSFER DOCUMENTS WITH HIS SEAL.

YET WHEN I RETURNED LAST YEAR, I FOUND MY PARENTS COMPLETELY SENILE AND CONFINED TO A HOSPITAL, AND THE SHOP AND LAND HAD ALL FALLEN INTO THE HANDS OF THE HEAD CLERK, TAKESHITA.


IT'S THANKS TO THE SUPPORT OF CHILDHOOD FRIEND MITANI AND THE LOCALS THAT I WAS FINALLY ABLE TO OPEN THIS SHOP...
MY FATHER PASSED AWAY SOON AFTER I RETURNED HOME, AND I TOOK MY MOTHER OUT OF THE HOSPITAL.
MOREOVER, STIRRING UP LEGAL TROUBLE WOULD TARNISH THE REPUTATION OF USHIMATSU. EVEN IF WE WIN, CUSTOMERS WILL SHY AWAY. THAT'S WHY WE'VE REFRAINED FROM LAWSUITS UNTIL NOW...
BUT WINNING THE LAWSUIT WILL BE TOUGH. PROVING IT INVALID JUST BECAUSE THE OLD MAN WAS LOSING HIS MARBLES WILL BE QUITE A CHALLENGE.
GROWING THIS SHOP BIGGER THAN 'USHIMATSU' ACROSS THE WAY WOULD BE THE REAL VICTORY, I BELIEVE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN!?
TRYING TO RECLAIM PARENTAL ASSETS DOESN'T EXUDE MUCH POSITIVITY, DOES IT?
IN A WORLD OVERFLOWING WITH CULINARY DELIGHTS, SUKIYAKI AND SHABU-SHABU HAVE LOST THEIR CHARM. THEY FAIL TO CAPTURE THE HEARTS OF BOTH THE YOUNG AND THE HIGH-CLASS ENTHUSIASTS.
TRUTH BE TOLD, I'VE HAD THIS NAGGING FEELING FOR A WHILE NOW THAT SUKIYAKI AND SHABU-SHABU MIGHT SOON BE ABANDONED BY OUR CUSTOMERS. WHILE VARIOUS DISHES ARE BEING FEATURED IN MAGAZINES AND ON TV, SUKIYAKI AND SHABU-SHABU RARELY MAKE THE HEADLINES THESE DAYS.

I AGREE WITH WHAT THAT MAN SAID. SUKIYAKI AND SHABU-SHABU ARE DISHES FROM A TIME WHEN THE JAPANESE HADN'T FULLY EMBRACED THE MEAT-EATING CULTURE YET, LACKING IN BRINGING OUT THE TRUE FLAVOR OF THE MEAT.
SUKIYAKI IS TOO SWEET AND HEAVY, DROWNING OUT THE TASTE OF THE MEAT, WHILE SHABU-SHABU UNNECESSARILY DISCARDS THE DELICIOUSNESS OF THE MEAT INTO THE HOTPOT.
OUCH...
THAT'S KAIBARA YUZAN FOR YOU...
THERE WAS A CUSTOMER AT 'USHIMATSU' EARLIER CRITICIZING SUKIYAKI AND SHABU-SHABU.
IT'S A REVAMPED VERSION OF THE OLD-FASHIONED SUKIYAKI.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY MY 'SHABUSKII'?
IF WE DO THAT, THIS LITTLE OLD JOINT 'USHIMATSU' WILL ALSO PROSPER AND GROW INTO A BIG RESTAURANT.
I SEE, THEY'RE SAYING TO REVAMP THE DISH TO BRING OUT THE FULL FLAVOR OF THE MEAT IN LINE WITH THE MEAT-EATING HABITS OF TODAY.
SHABUSKII? LIKE A MIX OF THE TWO TOGETHER?
WELL, EVEN KAIBARA YUZAN COMPLAINED THAT THE DISHES WERE OLD FASHIONED.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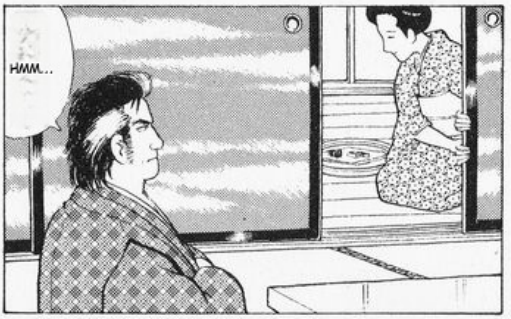
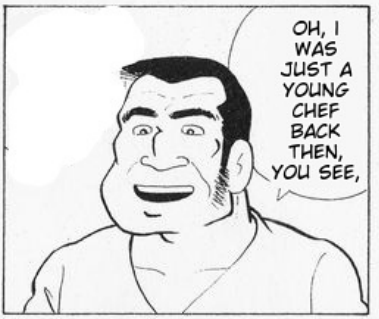
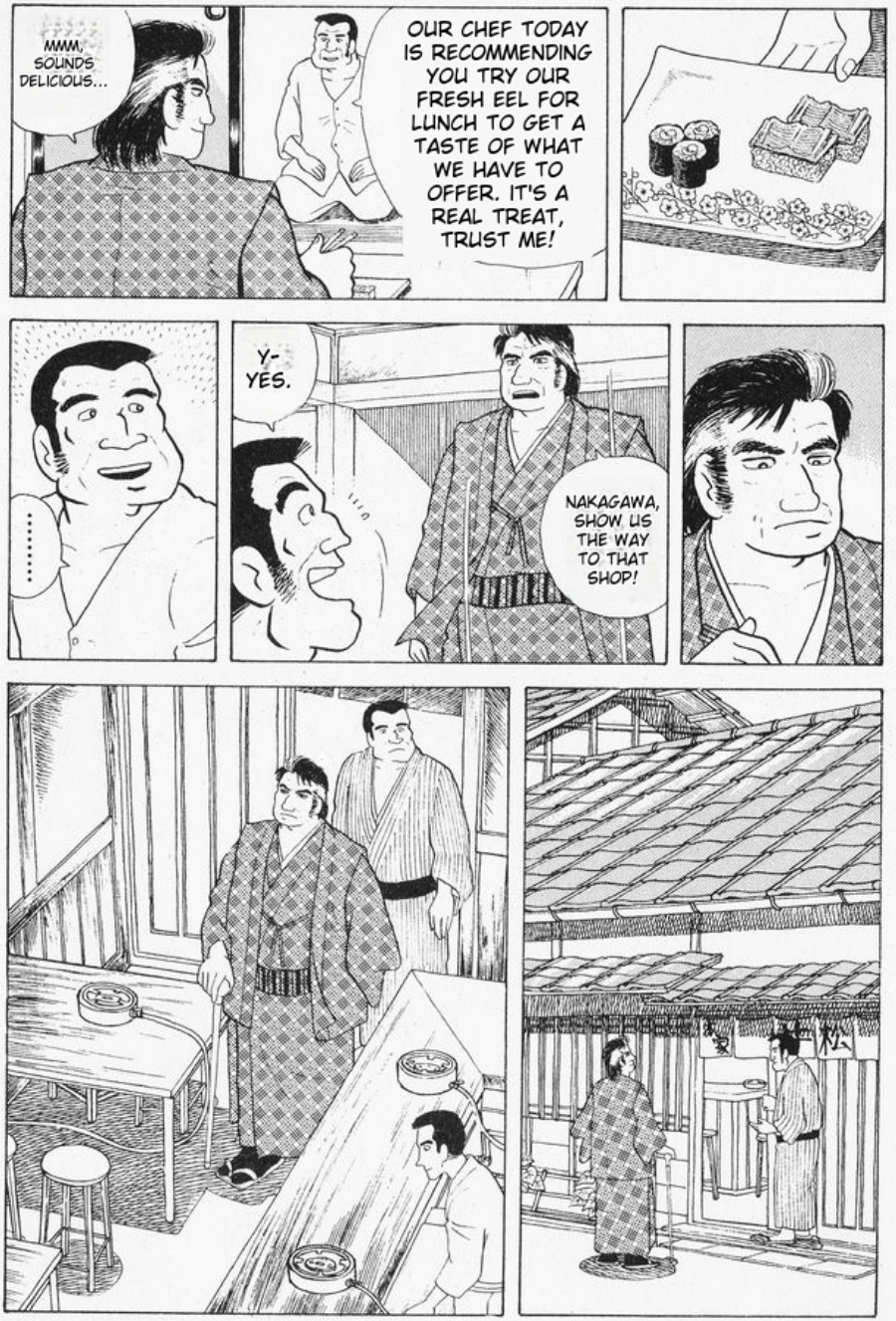
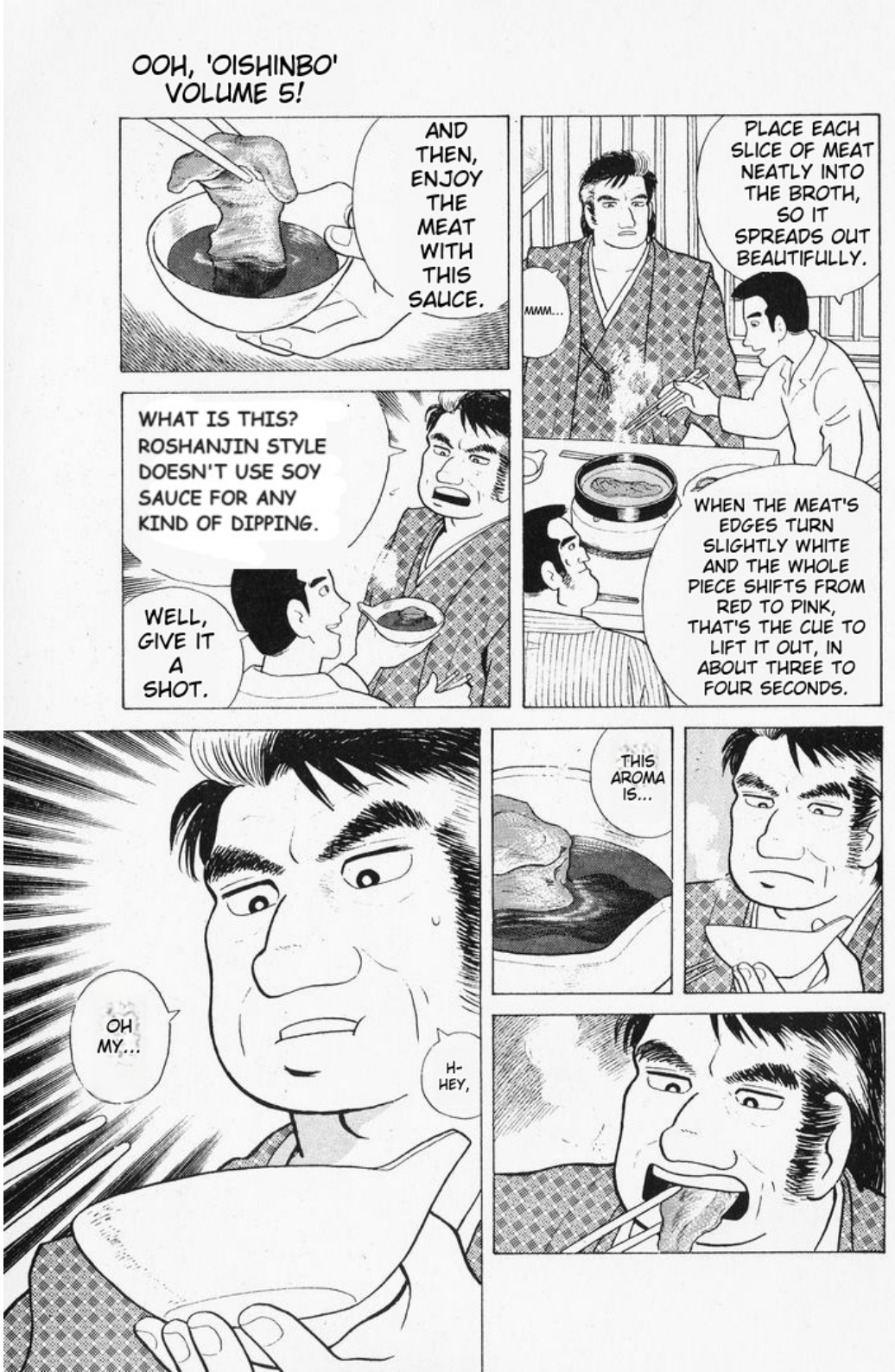
WAIT, ARE YOU RUNNING A PLACE THAT SERVES SUKIYAKI A LA ROSHANJIN STYLE?

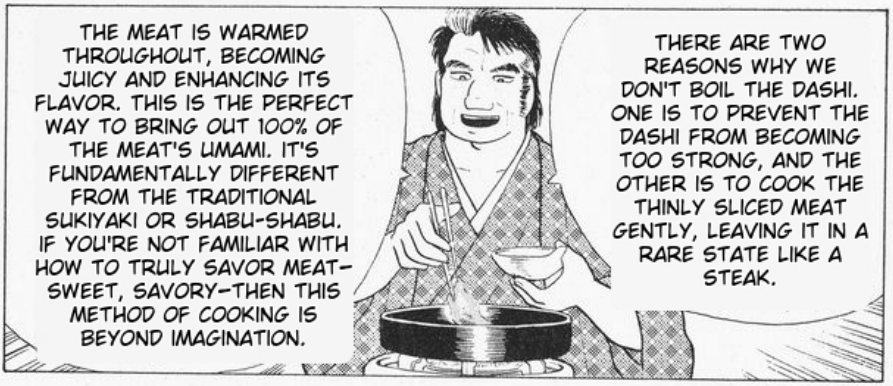

HMM...


OH, I WAS JUST A YOUNG CHEF BACK THEN, YOU SEE,

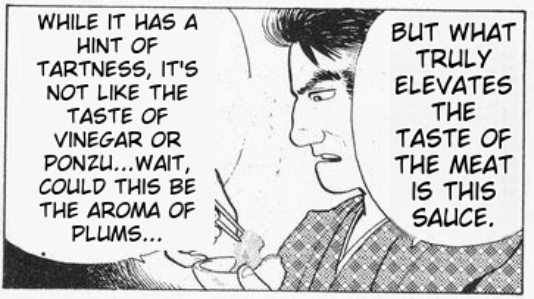

MMM, SOUNDS DELICIOUS...
OUR CHEF TODAY IS RECOMMENDING YOU TRY OUR FRESH EEL FOR LUNCH TO GET A TASTE OF WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER. IT'S A REAL TREAT, TRUST ME!
.....
Y-YES.
NAKAGAWA, SHOW US THE WAY TO THAT SHOP!

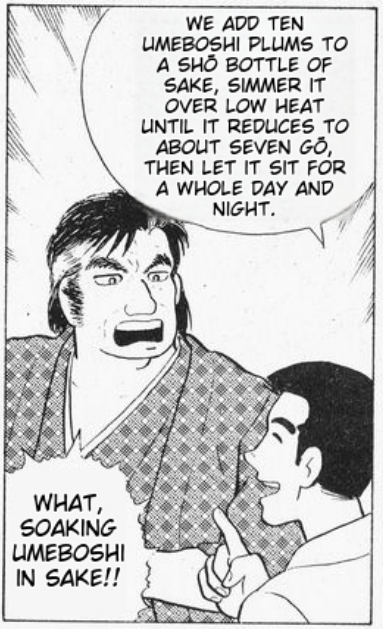
THIS PLACE, IT'S A SMALL EATERY, ISN'T IT...
HMM, THEY'RE USING GOOD BONITO FLAKES. THE WAY THEY MAKE THE BROTH IS FLAWLESS.
THEY'RE USING GOOD SAKE AND NOT A PINCH OF SUGAR.
KEEP THE FIRE VERY LOW SO THE BROTH INSIDE DOESN'T BOIL.
OH, THE BROTH IS ALREADY PREPARED.
THE HEIGHT OF THE LEEKS, THE THICKNESS OF THE TOFU, AND THE DEPTH OF THE BROTH IN THE POT ARE ALL PERFECTLY MATCHED. THIS IS INDEED A SUKIYAKI IN THE STYLE OF ROSHANJIN.
PLEASE TRY OUR UNIQUE WAY OF EATING HERE.
IF IT'S ROSHANJIN STYLE, THEN THE MEAT SHOULD BE CUT THICKER FOR SUKIYAKI!!
WHAT'S WITH THIS MEAT, IT'S THINLY SLICED LIKE FOR SHABU-SHABU!

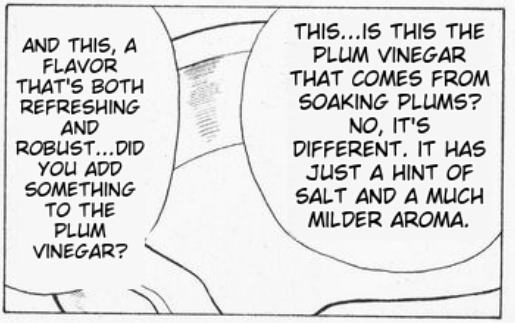

OOH, 'OISHINBO' VOLUME 5!
AND THEN, ENJOY THE MEAT WITH THIS SAUCE.
PLACE EACH SLICE OF MEAT NEATLY INTO THE BROTH, SO IT SPREADS OUT BEAUTIFULLY.
MMM...
WHAT IS THIS? ROSHANJIN STYLE DOESN'T USE SOY SAUCE FOR ANY KIND OF DIPPING.
WELL, GIVE IT A SHOT.
WHEN THE MEAT'S EDGES TURN SLIGHTLY WHITE AND THE WHOLE PIECE SHIFTS FROM RED TO PINK, THAT'S THE CUE TO LIFT IT OUT, IN ABOUT THREE TO FOUR SECONDS.
THIS AROMA IS...
OH MY...
H-HEY,


THE MEAT IS WARMED THROUGHOUT, BECOMING JUICY AND ENHANCING ITS FLAVOR. THIS IS THE PERFECT WAY TO BRING OUT 100% OF THE MEAT'S UMAMI. IT'S FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THE TRADITIONAL SUKIYAKI OR SHABU-SHABU. IF YOU'RE NOT FAMILIAR WITH HOW TO TRULY SAVOR MEAT—SWEET, SAVORY—THEN THIS METHOD OF COOKING IS BEYOND IMAGINATION.
THERE ARE TWO REASONS WHY WE DON'T BOIL THE DASHI. ONE IS TO PREVENT THE DASHI FROM BECOMING TOO STRONG, AND THE OTHER IS TO COOK THE THINLY SLICED MEAT GENTLY, LEAVING IT IN A RARE STATE LIKE A STEAK.

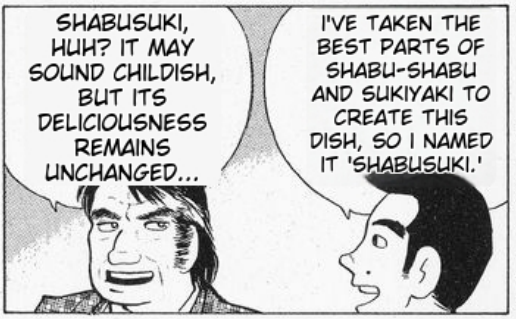
THE SAUCE IS MADE BY MIXING THIS WITH SOY SAUCE AND DASHI.


WHILE IT HAS A HINT OF TARTNESS, IT'S NOT LIKE THE TASTE OF VINEGAR OR PONZU...WAIT, COULD THIS BE THE AROMA OF PLUMS...
BUT WHAT TRULY ELEVATES THE TASTE OF THE MEAT IS THIS SAUCE.


WE ADD TEN UMEBOSHI PLUMS TO A SHŌ BOTTLE OF SAKE, SIMMER IT OVER LOW HEAT UNTIL IT REDUCES TO ABOUT SEVEN GŌ, THEN LET IT SIT FOR A WHOLE DAY AND NIGHT.
WHAT, SOAKING UMEBOSHI IN SAKE!!


AND THIS, A FLAVOR THAT'S BOTH REFRESHING AND ROBUST...DID YOU ADD SOMETHING TO THE PLUM VINEGAR?
THIS...IS THIS THE PLUM VINEGAR THAT COMES FROM SOAKING PLUMS? NO, IT'S DIFFERENT. IT HAS JUST A HINT OF SALT AND A MUCH MILDER AROMA.

IN THAT CASE, THE DISCARDED UMEBOSHI RIGHT AFTER SIMMERING THE SAKE... DELIBERATELY LEAVING IT TO BRING OUT THE ACIDITY...
IN RESTAURANTS, THE SAME SAUCE USED FOR SASHIMI IS DILUTED WITH IT. IT MAKES SASHIMI TASTE EVEN BETTER THAN EATING IT WITH RAW SOY SAUCE...


SHABUSUKI, HUH? IT MAY SOUND CHILDISH, BUT ITS DELICIOUSNESS REMAINS UNCHANGED...
I'VE TAKEN THE BEST PARTS OF SHABU-SHABU AND SUKIYAKI TO CREATE THIS DISH, SO I NAMED IT 'SHABUSUKI.'

RO-ZANJIN-STYLE SUKIYAKI REQUIRES TOO MUCH EFFORT, SO IT'S SOMETHING ONLY FOOD ENTHUSIASTS MAKE AT HOME. IN CONTRAST, THIS DISH CAN BE SERVED TO MANY CUSTOMERS AT A RESTAURANT.
AND THE FLAVOR, THANKS TO THE PLUM-SEASONED SAUCE, IS REFRESHINGLY NOBLE COMPARED TO RO-ZANJIN-STYLE SUKIYAKI.

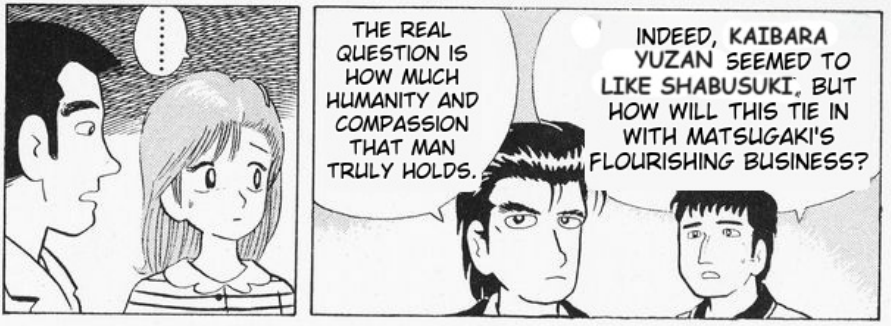
RO-ZANJIN-STYLE SUKIYAKI - DID YOU COME UP WITH THIS DISH ON YOUR OWN, BELIEVING THAT IF YOU SEARCH THROUGH LITERATURE, YOU CAN GRASP IT?
BY THE WAY, SIR...

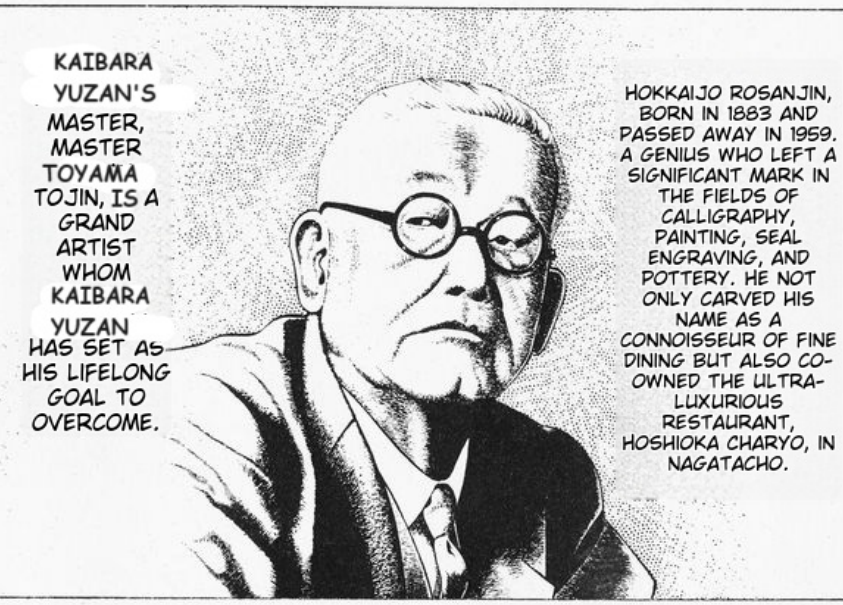
I SEE...

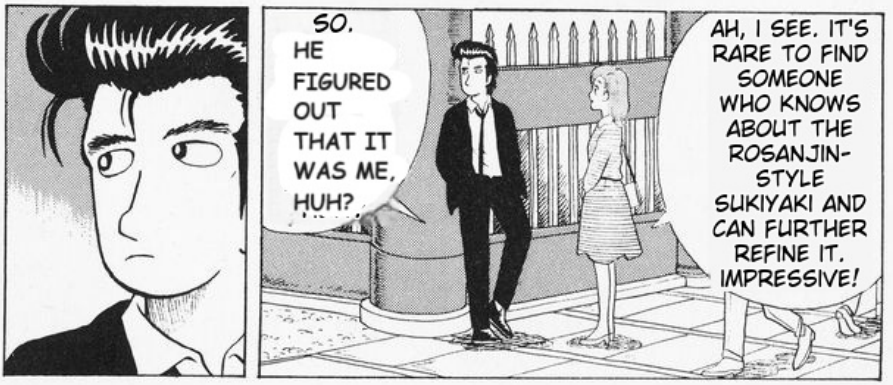
NO, IT'S NOT SOMETHING I CAME UP WITH.

MARBLING IN MEAT REFERS TO THE FATTY STREAKS.

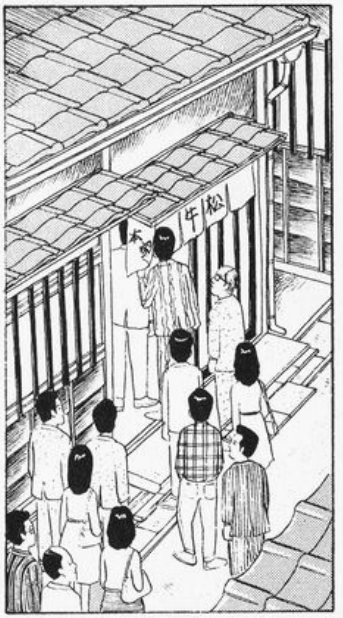
OOH, 'OISHINBO' VOLUME 5!





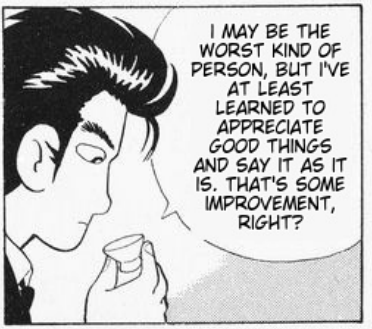


WE'RE SO BUSY HERE THAT WE HARDLY HAVE TIME TO REST... ALL THANKS TO MR. YUZAN.
IT ALL STARTED WITH CUSTOMERS WHO HEARD ABOUT IT FROM MR. YUZAN, AND THEN IT SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE THROUGH WORD OF MOUTH.



THIS IS AMAZING, A REAL HIT!

I DIDN'T DO IT FOR MY OWN BENEFIT, YOU KNOW.
I DON'T THINK IT'S FAIR TO SAY THAT.


I MAY BE THE WORST KIND OF PERSON, BUT I'VE AT LEAST LEARNED TO APPRECIATE GOOD THINGS AND SAY IT AS IT IS. THAT'S SOME IMPROVEMENT, RIGHT?

COME ON, DON'T BE SILLY.
HE'S GOT A BIGGER HEART THAN YAMAOKA-SAN.
BUT EVEN THOUGH KAIBARA YUZAN KNEW THAT MR. YAMAOKA WAS BEHIND HIM, HE STILL PRAISED THIS SHOP!
LOOK OUTSIDE.
OH, PLEASE DON'T FIGHT ON MY BEHALF.
THANKS TO KAIBARA YUZAN!
I'LL SHOW THAT MAN UP IN BUSINESS, JUST LIKE YAMAOKA-SAN SAID. THE BANK IS EVEN WILLING TO LEND US MONEY NOW.
DAMN IT.
TAKESHITA, THIS SHOP IS BOOMING SO MUCH, IT'S DRIVING HIM CRAZY.

HEH HEH.
OH,
SHIRO...

第7話
サラダと美容

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I'VE BEEN PRESSURED TO INTRODUCE A SUITABLE MAN TO THE CHAIRMAN'S DAUGHTER AS PART OF A LONGSTANDING TRADITION. IT'S A MATTER OF HONOR TO AT LEAST MAKE THE MATCHMAKING HAPPEN.
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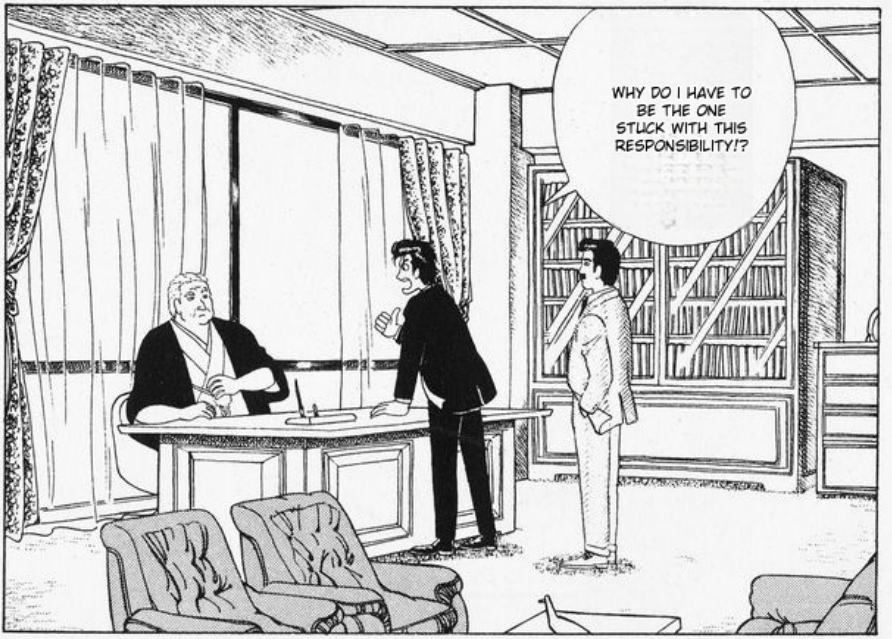
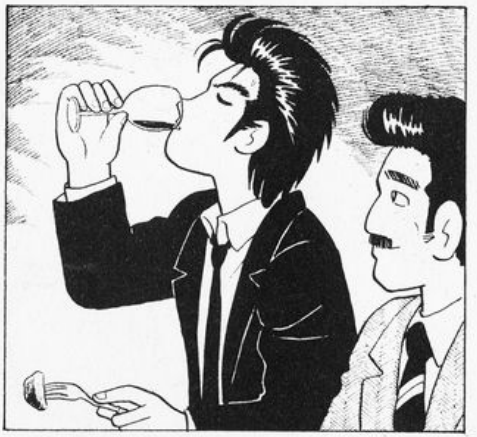
MR. MATSUTANI OF THE ADVERTISING AGENCY HAS A HOBBY OF BEING A MATCHMAKER, YOU SEE.


WHY DO I HAVE TO BE THE ONE STUCK WITH THIS RESPONSIBILITY!?

YAMAOKA, THIS IS A BUSINESS ORDER.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
CAN I REALLY ASK THIS KIND OF THING FROM OTHER SERIOUS EMPLOYEES?
THIS IS A JOKE, ABSOLUTELY NOT!!
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS...
LOOK, I'M SORRY FOR ASKING YOU TO DO THIS, BUT YOU OWE ME A FAVOR AT LEAST AFTER ALL THE TROUBLE YOU'VE CAUSED SINCE YOU WERE HIRED!
I'M NOT TELLING YOU TO GET MARRIED.
Restaurant Maison

GOSH, IT'S SO REFRESHING TO SEE THOSE YOUNG LOVEBIRDS! YAMAOKA-KUN AND AKIKO-SAN MAKE SUCH A PERFECT PAIR, DON'T YOU THINK?
REALLY NOW.

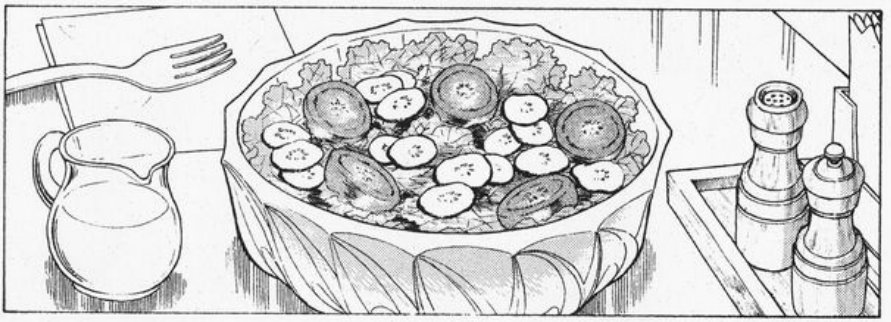
IF WE TALLY UP ALL THE MARRIAGES I'VE PLAYED MATCHMAKER FOR BETWEEN YAMAOKA-KUN AND AKIKO-SAN, IT ADDS UP TO A WHOPPING 197 COUPLES! I'M AIMING FOR A NICE ROUND 200, SO CLOSE YET SO FAR, HAHAHA!

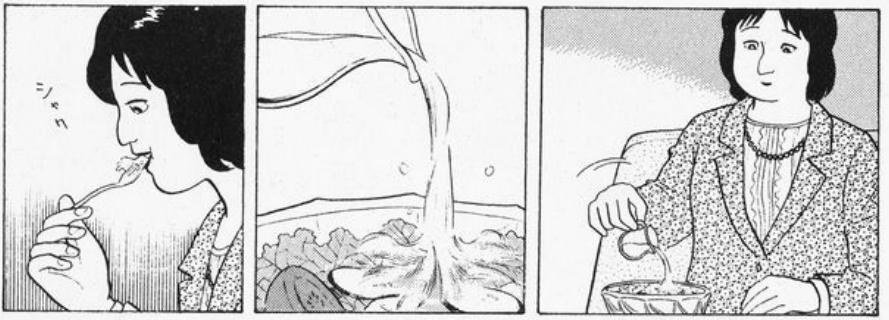


OOH, 'OISHINBO' VOLUME 5!

I'M TRULY SORRY. MY ATTITUDE WAS BAD BECAUSE I WAS IRRITATED WITH MYSELF FOR GOING ALONG WITH THIS FAKE ARRANGED MEETING OUT OF OBLIGATION.
OH, I SEE, MATSUTANI-SAN, OUT OF OBLIGATION...
SNACK
DOMON
IT'S NOT BECAUSE I DISLIKE YOU.
NO, THE FAULT LIES WITH MATSUTANI-SAN FOR PUSHING TOO HARD.
HOW CAN I APOLOGIZE...
THANK YOU.
WELL THEN, MAY I HAVE THE SALAD?
I DIDN'T EAT ANYTHING AT THE RESTAURANT... HOW ABOUT GRABBING A BITE NOW? LOOKS LIKE THIS PLACE HAS SOME GRUB.
SEEMS LIKE I'VE GOTTEN HUNGRY ALL OF A SUDDEN.

OOH, 'OISHINBO' VOLUME 5!





YEAH...
ARE YOU THAT DESPERATE TO BE SKINNY?
WELCOME, WELCOME.
YOU SURE HAVE THE GUTS TO STEP OUT IN THOSE CLOTHES."
WHAT TERRIBLE TASTE YOU HAVE.
OOPS!

DO YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER?
HIROTA NAOFU. HE'S A RISING SUCCESSFUL FASION DESIGNER.
WHAT THE HELL DID YOU SAY?!
I'M A FRIEND OF AKIKO'S. LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE TO HER, BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO BE AN ASSHOLE TO HER.
AND YOU ARE?
EX-FIANCÉ?...
ACTUALLY, WE WERE ALMOST GETTING MARRIED.
IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE DYNAMICS BETWEEN AKIKO AND ME, BEST KEEP YOUR OPINIONS TO YOURSELF.
SHE'S THE ONE WHO CALLED OFF THE ENGAGEMENT!
HMPH, LET ME MAKE ONE THING CLEAR.
EVEN MORE REASON NOT TO INSULT AN EX-FIANCÉ IN PUBLIC, IT'S NOT MANLY AT ALL!!

LET'S GO TO ANOTHER STORE.
I GAVE UP ON GETTING MARRIED AT THE POINT WHEN I ENDED THINGS WITH MR. HIROTA...
WELL, THE TRUTH IS, I CAME OUT TODAY AS A COURTESY TO MR. MATSUTANI FOR THE ARRANGED MEETING.
THEN WHY CALL OFF THE ENGAGEMENT...?
I MUST TAKE MY LEAVE NOW.
YOU STILL LOVE MR. HIROTA, DON'T YOU?

THE CUSTOMER HAS BEEN WAITING FOR YOU FOR AGES.
新聞社
WHO IS IT?
CUSTOMER, FOR ME?
OH, SO IT'S YOU, MR. HIROTA?
SORRY FOR BUGGING YOU AT YOUR JOB...

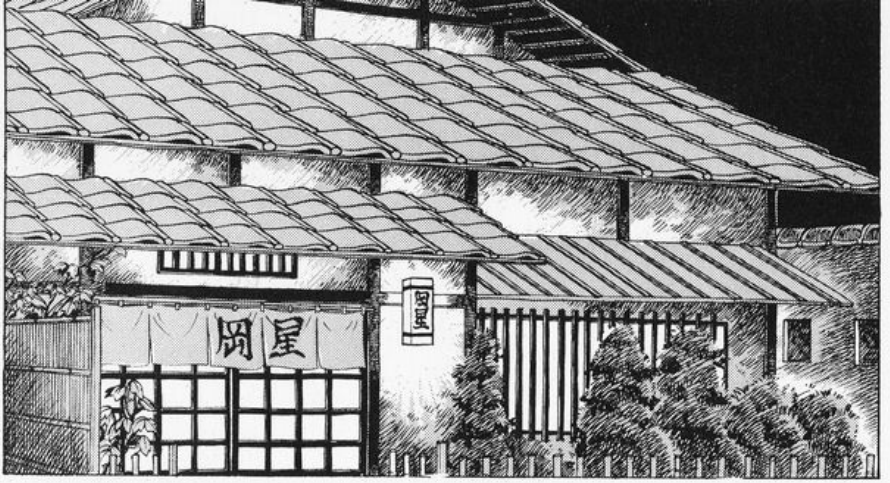
EH?! YOU WENT ON A BLIND DATE?!
I MUST SAY, I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF INVESTIGATING THE SETUP BETWEEN MR. YAMAOKA AND MS. AKIYAMA. MY APOLOGIES.
I DIDN'T HEAR A THING ABOUT THIS!
OHARA-SAN FORCED ME TO GO AS A PERSONAL FAVOR! I HAD NO SAY IN THE MATTER!
SO?
LIH, EXCUSE ME...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? CAN I AT LEAST GET SOME TEA OVER HERE?
WELL, IT'S A SHAME IT WAS JUST OUT OF OBLIGATION!
SO, YOU SEE, THIS WHOLE THING WASN'T EXACTLY A SMOOTH RIDE FROM THE START. THE LADY I WAS SET UP WITH WAS IN THE SAME BOAT, JUST THERE OUT OF OBLIGATION...

AKIKO WAS JUST GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS TOO, HUH...
ズー
TO THINK I WOULD FEEL JEALOUS SEEING YAMAOKA WITH HER, AND DO SUCH TERRIBLE THINGS...
SHE UNILATERALLY BROKE OFF OUR ENGAGEMENT, AND I WAS DEEPLY HURT... IT'S BECAUSE I LOVED AKIKO.
IT SEEMS YOU'RE DELIGHTED TO HEAR THAT SHE NEVER INTENDED TO MARRY IN THE FIRST PLACE.
WHY WOULD SOMEONE LIKE ME... THERE MUST BE MORE SUITABLE CANDIDATES, LIKE FRIENDS OR RELATIVES...
CAN YOU PLEASE TRY TO FIND OUT WHAT THEY ARE?
I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU, MR. YAMAOKA. I HAVEN'T BEEN TOLD AKIKO'S TRUE FEELINGS OR WHY OUR ENGAGEMENT WAS CALLED OFF.
HMM...
I BELIEVE MR. YAMAOKA IS A MAN OF HONOR. I BEG YOU, MR. YAMAOKA, TO HELP ME FIND OUT WHAT AKIKO'S FEELINGS ARE!
I GAVE IT A SHOT. BUT AKIKO NEVER REVEALS HER TRUE FEELINGS TO ANYONE.

I JUST DON'T GET IT...
THEN WHY CALL OFF THE ENGAGEMENT...
AKIKO AND HIROTA, THEY'RE TOTALLY IN LOVE WITH EACH OTHER, AREN'T THEY?
SEEMS LIKE IT...
THIS GUY HIROTA MAY LOOK FLASHY, BUT HE'S GOT SUBSTANCE, MAN.
I'VE FIGURED OUT ONE THING FOR SURE.
HIROTA ONCE SAID, 'THERE'S NO WAY TO DESIGN CLOTHES THAT LOOK GOOD ON FAT PEOPLE...'
OH NO...
BECAUSE I'M FAT.
IT'S A DONE DEAL NOW, BUT...

BUT MR. HIROTA TRULY LOVES AKIKO.
ONE DAY, I REALIZED THAT HAVING A CHUBBY WIFE LIKE ME WOULD PROBABLY GET IN THE WAY OF A FASHION DESIGNER'S WORK... SO, I THOUGHT THE ONLY OPTION WAS TO CALL OFF THE ENGAGEMENT.
SO, I MADE AN EFFORT. BUT I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO LOSE ANY WEIGHT.
NO WAY... EVEN IF I DID SAY THAT, IT MUST'VE BEEN A JOKE!!!
NAKAO HIROTA
THAT IS TRUE
THERE'S NO WAY THAT A MAN IN LOVE WOULD SAY SUCH A THING TO HIS BELOVED.
NAKAO HIROTA
W-WAIT, HOLD ON!
TO A WOMAN STRUGGLING WITH HER WEIGHT, IT'S NO LAUGHING MATTER.

I'M A FASHION DESIGNER, YOU KNOW! I'M SICK AND TIRED OF WOMEN WHO ARE ONLY PRETTY ON THE OUTSIDE.
WHAT I SEEK IN AKIKO-SAN IS NOT SOMETHING AS SUPERFICIAL AS BEING FAT OR THIN. IT'S A HUMAN CHARM THAT SURPASSES SUCH TRIVIALITIES!
THAT'S RIGHT.
THE CHALLENGE IS HOW TO CONVEY HIROTA-SAN'S THOUGHTS TO AKIKO-SAN.
I MUST HAVE BEEN SUCH A CLUELESS MAN...
I NEVER REALIZED THAT AKIKO-SAN WAS SO BOTHERED BY BEING OVERWEIGHT...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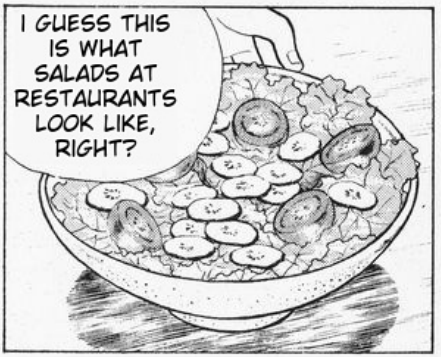

I GUESS THIS IS WHAT SALADS AT RESTAURANTS LOOK LIKE, RIGHT?

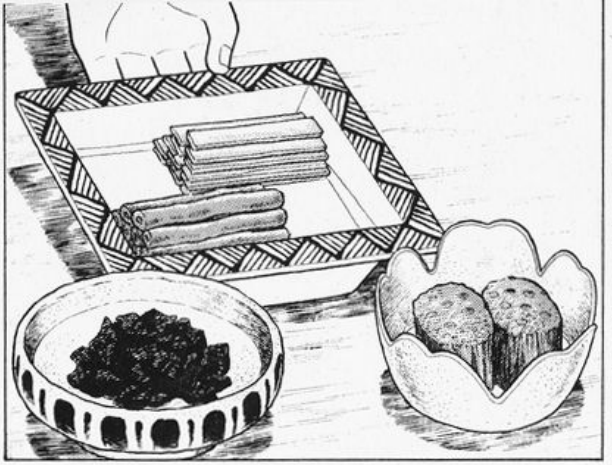
YEAH, THIS LOOKS DELICIOUS, THANKS!

WHY DO YOU EAT SALAD?
IT'S FOR BEAUTY, YOU KNOW.

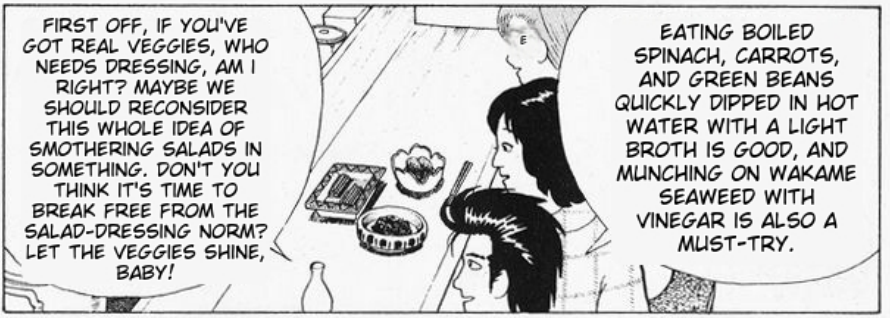
WHAT DO YOU PUT ON IT?
FRENCH DRESSING.

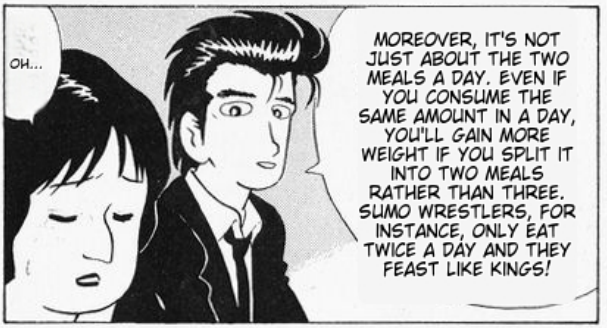
WHY! RAW VEGETABLES ARE PACKED WITH VITAMIN C, VINEGAR IN THE DRESSING HELPS TURN FOOD INTO ENERGY, AND PLANT OILS HELP FLUSH OUT CHOLESTEROL, RIGHT?
WHAT! AN ENEMY OF BEAUTY!?
NO KIDDING, THAT SALAD IS THE ENEMY OF BEAUTY.
HERE, TRY THIS...
WELL...
ALRIGHT.
MOST VEGGIES NOWADAYS ARE GROWN IN GREENHOUSES, AND THE AMOUNT OF VITAMINS IS WAY LESS COMPARED TO THE REAL DEAL.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT VITAMINS! YOU'RE MISSING OUT ON FIBER THAT ABSORBS WASTE IN YOUR INTESTINES AND KEEPS YOUR DIGESTION SMOOTH. CONSTIPATION IS THE ARCHENEMY OF BEAUTY, YOU KNOW.
THIS LACK OF VITAMINS IS UNACCEPTABLE...
JUST TRY PEELING IT, AND YOU'LL SEE. RAW VEGGIES MAY LOOK BULKY, BUT THEY'RE ACTUALLY QUITE MEAGER.

SUNFLOWER OIL, COTTONSEED OIL, CORN OIL, OLIVE OIL, THOSE ARE GOOD CHOICES FOR SALADS.
THE MOST COMMON ONE IS RAPESEED OIL. IT'S CHEMICALLY STABLE AND HARD TO DIGEST IN LARGE QUANTITIES AS A DRESSING, CAUSING INDIGESTION AND STOMACH DISCOMFORT.
OILS UNSUITABLE FOR SALADS?
THE PROBLEM LIES IN THE DRESSING. YOU SEE, THERE ARE TONS OF SALAD OILS OUT THERE THAT MIX OILS UNSUITABLE FOR SALADS. SO, ONE MUST BE CAUTIOUS.
IT SEEMS WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO HUNT FOR GOOD OILS AND MAKE OUR OWN DRESSINGS, HUH?
STORING DRESSINGS ISN'T IDEAL.
PLUS, ANY OIL, ONCE OXIDIZED, TURNS INTO HARMFUL STUFF FOR THE BODY. THAT'S WHY IT'S BEST TO MAKE DRESSINGS JUST BEFORE EATING, IN SMALL BATCHES.
IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL WITH THIS AND THAT, SALADS CAN TRULY BECOME ENEMIES OF BEAUTY!
WELL...
ANOTHER THING IS SALT. AKIKO, THE OTHER DAY YOU WERE SPRINKLING SALT ON YOUR DRESSING, BUT JUST THE DRESSING ITSELF ALREADY PACKS QUITE A SALTY PUNCH. EXCESSIVE SALT IN THE BODY RETAINS WATER, LEADING TO BLOATING.
SO, WHAT SHOULD WE DO THEN?
AND NO MATTER HOW GOOD THE OIL IS, IT'S STILL HIGH IN CALORIES. OVERINDULGE IN DRESSING, AND WEIGHT GAIN IS INEVITABLE.
OH, I'VE BEEN CHOOSING ALL THE WRONG ONES...

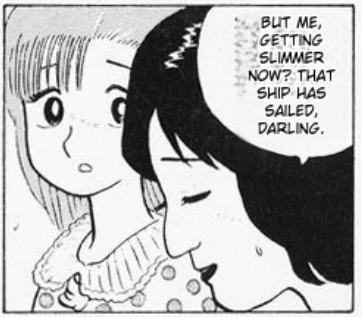


IS THAT...?
SURE THING.

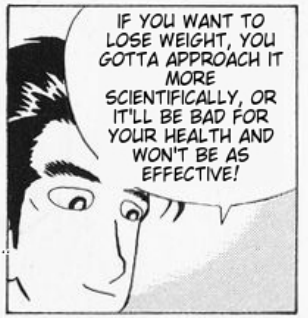

FIRST OFF, IF YOU'VE GOT REAL VEGGIES, WHO NEEDS DRESSING, AM I RIGHT? MAYBE WE SHOULD RECONSIDER THIS WHOLE IDEA OF SMOTHERING SALADS IN SOMETHING. DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME TO BREAK FREE FROM THE SALAD-DRESSING NORM? LET THE VEGGIES SHINE, BABY!
EATING BOILED SPINACH, CARROTS, AND GREEN BEANS QUICKLY DIPPED IN HOT WATER WITH A LIGHT BROTH IS GOOD, AND MUNCHING ON WAKAME SEAWEED WITH VINEGAR IS ALSO A MUST-TRY.

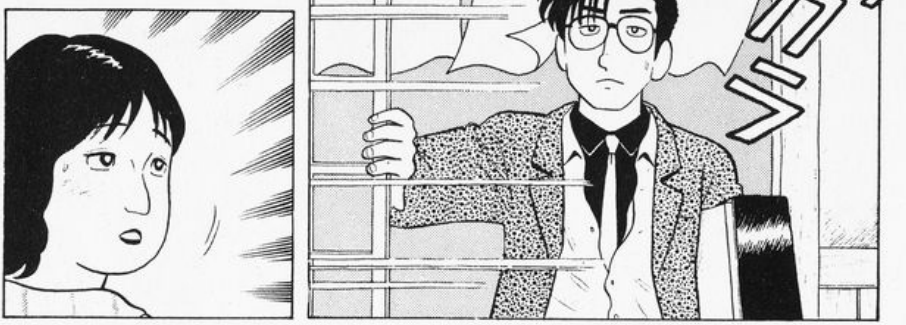

OH...
MOREOVER, IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE TWO MEALS A DAY. EVEN IF YOU CONSUME THE SAME AMOUNT IN A DAY, YOU'LL GAIN MORE WEIGHT IF YOU SPLIT IT INTO TWO MEALS RATHER THAN THREE. SUMO WRESTLERS, FOR INSTANCE, ONLY EAT TWICE A DAY AND THEY FEAST LIKE KINGS!

OH, ABSOLUTELY! I JUST USE DRESSING OUT OF HABIT WITHOUT EVEN THINKING ABOUT IT. IT'S LIKE SECOND NATURE TO ME.


BUT ME, GETTING SLIMMER NOW? THAT SHIP HAS SAILED, DARLING.

OH, YES, ABSOLUTELY...


IF YOU WANT TO LOSE WEIGHT, YOU GOTTA APPROACH IT MORE SCIENTIFICALLY, OR IT'LL BE BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH AND WON'T BE AS EFFECTIVE!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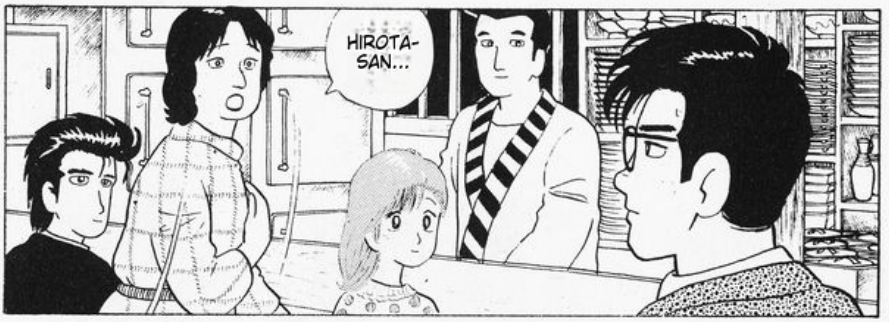
HIROTA-SAN...

HERE WE GO...
A DRESS... FOR ME...

NO, I'D RATHER NOT DO IT HERE.
IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE, PLEASE USE THE ROOM IN THE BACK...

IT'S A DRESS DESIGNED JUST FOR YOU. WOULD YOU TRY IT ON FOR ME?
I DID ALL THE CUTTING AND SEWING. IT SHOULD FIT YOU PERFECTLY. IF IT DOESN'T, I'LL HANG MYSELF.

MR. YAMAOKA! I REALLY BELIEVE I CAN LOSE WEIGHT THIS TIME!
YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL TO ME NO MATTER WHAT SIZE YOU ARE. I'LL PROVE IT BY DESIGNING YOU A WHOLE NEW WARDROBE!
WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS SO FLIPPANT?!
EVERYTHING WENT WELL, I'M SO RELIEVED.
ARRANGED MARRIAGES CAN BE QUITE THRILLING, YOU KNOW. IT'S LIKE A ROLLERCOASTER RIDE!

第8話

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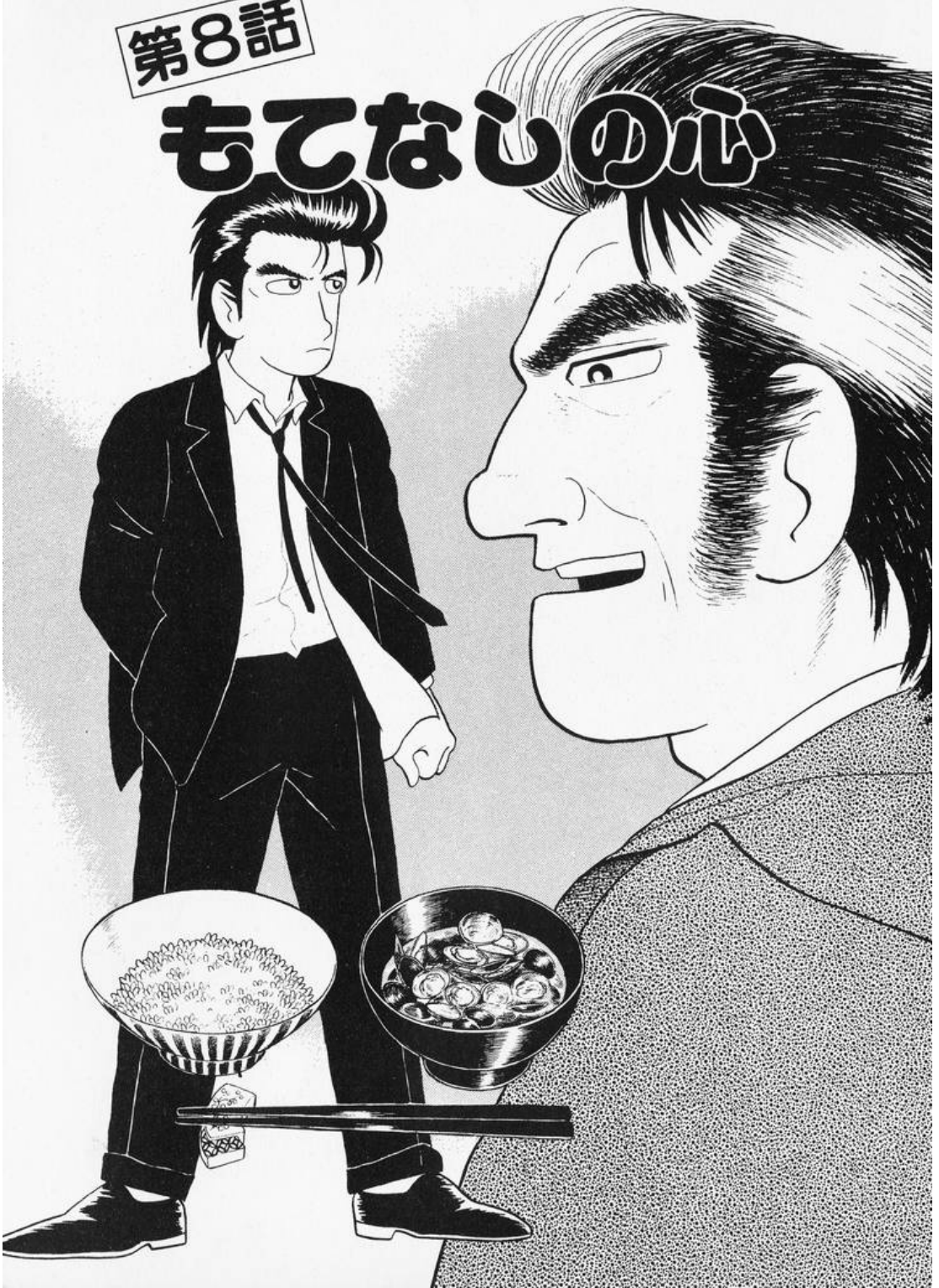

HEY THERE, EVERYONE, HOW'S IT GOING?
IS THIS YOUR GRANDDAUGHTER?
OH MY, TODAY YOU'RE ACCOMPANIED BY A LADY, HUH?
HUH?
WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T PROFESSOR TOYAMA

FIANCEE?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, MY GRANDDAUGHTER? THIS ONE'S MY FIANCEE!
MARRYING THIS YOUNG LADY!
BEHOLD, THE WEDDING INVITATION! I'M GETTING HITCHED TO THIS REIKO SUZUMURA THIS TIME.
I'M REIKO, NICE TO MEET YOU...
P...PLAYBOY...
EVER SINCE MY PREVIOUS WIFE PASSED AWAY, I'VE BEEN LIVING THE PLAYBOY LIFE TO THE FULLEST, BUT FINALLY GOT CAUGHT BY THIS WOMAN!
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DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR DUE TO SENILE DEMENTIA, HUH?
UNBELIEVABLE!

YES, THANK YOU.
HEY HEY, MAKE SURE TO DROP BY OUR WEDDING PARTY, OKAY?
IT'S AN HONOR.
OH MY, EXCUSE ME, BUT TOJIN-KUN IS QUITE THE CATCH. AFTER A FIERCE BATTLE OF LOVE, I MANAGED TO WIN HIS HEART!
TOJIN-KUN?
SHIRO...
OH YES, TOJIN-KUN
HEHE, SAY WHAT YOU WILL, BUT I'M ON CLOUD NINE, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?!
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SURE THING, I'LL BE THERE. WE'RE NEVER TOO OLD TO HAVE A GOOD TIME, RIGHT?
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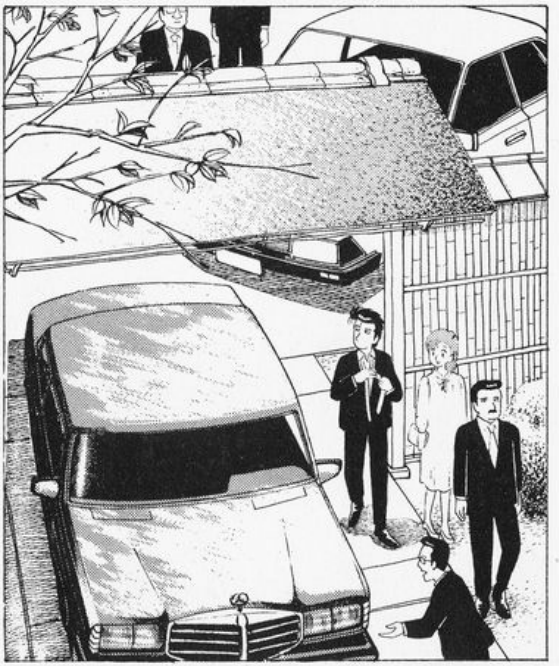
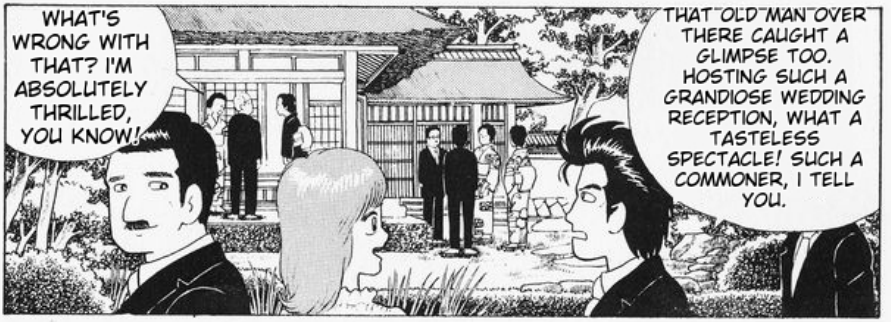
INCREDIBLE, SO MANY GUESTS!
INDEED, THE FAMOUS TANGSHAN POTTER ATTRACTS ELITES FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE.




WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT? I'M ABSOLUTELY THRILLED, YOU KNOW!
THAT OLD MAN OVER THERE CAUGHT A GLIMPSE TOO. HOSTING SUCH A GRANDIOSE WEDDING RECEPTION, WHAT A TASTELESS SPECTACLE! SUCH A COMMONER, I TELL YOU.

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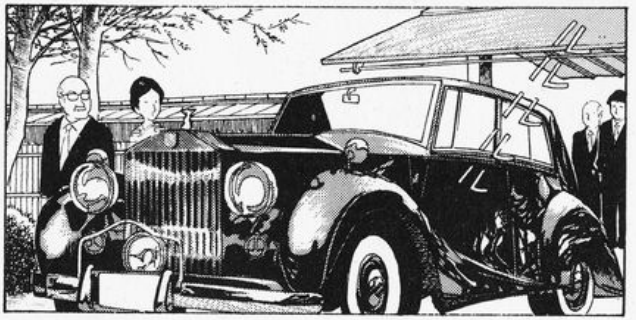

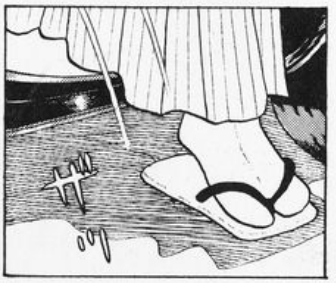

OF COURSE THEY'D INVITE KAIBARA YUZAN, BEING A DISCIPLE OF TOYAMA TOJIN.
OH, LOOK, IT'S KAIBARA YUZAN!
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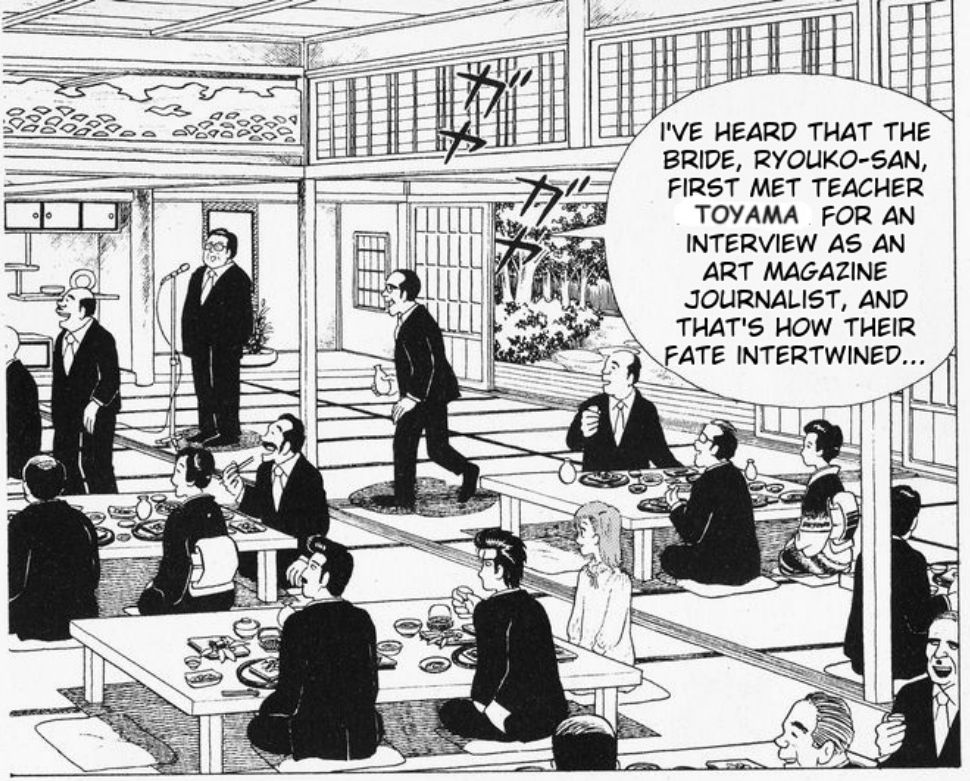
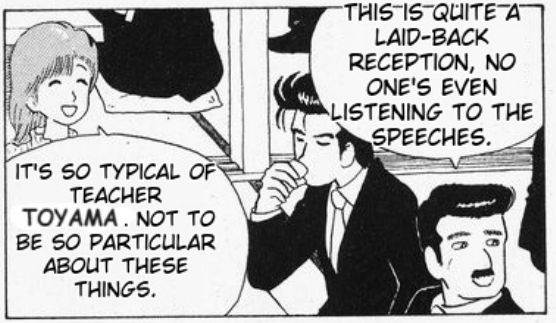
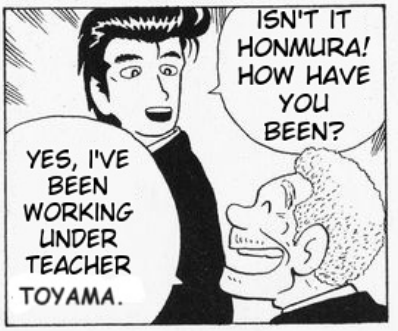
UNLESS, OF COURSE, HE'S LOOKING FOR A BRAWL.
HEY, IT'S A JOYOUS DAY TODAY, SO LET'S NOT RUFFLE FEATHERS WITH KAIBARA YUZAN, OKAY?


I'VE HEARD THAT THE BRIDE, RYOUKO-SAN, FIRST MET TEACHER TOYAMA FOR AN INTERVIEW AS AN ART MAGAZINE JOURNALIST, AND THAT'S HOW THEIR FATE INTERTWINED...

SHIROU-SAMA, LONG TIME NO SEE.


THIS IS QUITE A LAID-BACK RECEPTION, NO ONE'S EVEN LISTENING TO THE SPEECHES.
IT'S SO TYPICAL OF TEACHER TOYAMA. NOT TO BE SO PARTICULAR ABOUT THESE THINGS.

MY HUMBLE ABILITIES ARE NOTHING COMPARED TO...
INDEED, IT WAS THANKS TO HONMURA THAT TOYAMA'S POTTERY TURNS OUT SO SPLENDIDLY. HONMURA IS A MASTER KILN KEEPER.


ISN'T IT HONMURA! HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?
YES, I'VE BEEN WORKING UNDER TEACHER TOYAMA.

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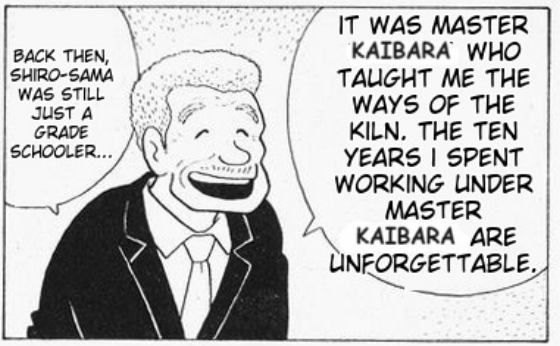
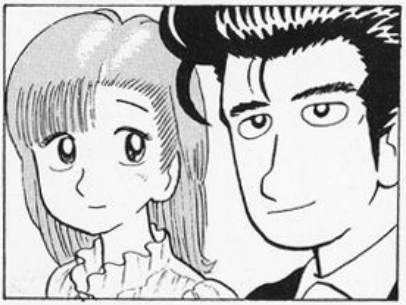
I REMEMBER PLAYING A LOT WITH HONMURA BACK IN THE DAY.


BACK THEN, SHIRO-SAMA WAS STILL JUST A GRADE SCHOOLER...
IT WAS MASTER KAIBARA WHO TAUGHT ME THE WAYS OF THE KILN. THE TEN YEARS I SPENT WORKING UNDER MASTER KAIBARA ARE UNFORGETTABLE.



THOSE WERE THE DAYS, OH HOW I MISS THEM SO...HM.

SHIRO, COME HERE FOR A MOMENT.
HO HO HO, BEHOLD MY LOVELY BRIDE! SHE'S ABSOLUTELY ENCHANTING, ISN'T SHE?
YES, WHAT IS IT?
THIS IS RIDICULOUS, I CAN'T STAND IT.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH CALLING SOMETHING CHARMING WHEN IT'S ACTUALLY CHARMING?
OH, YOU SILLY TARO, CAN'T YOU SEE WE'RE IN A BIT OF A PICKLE HERE?
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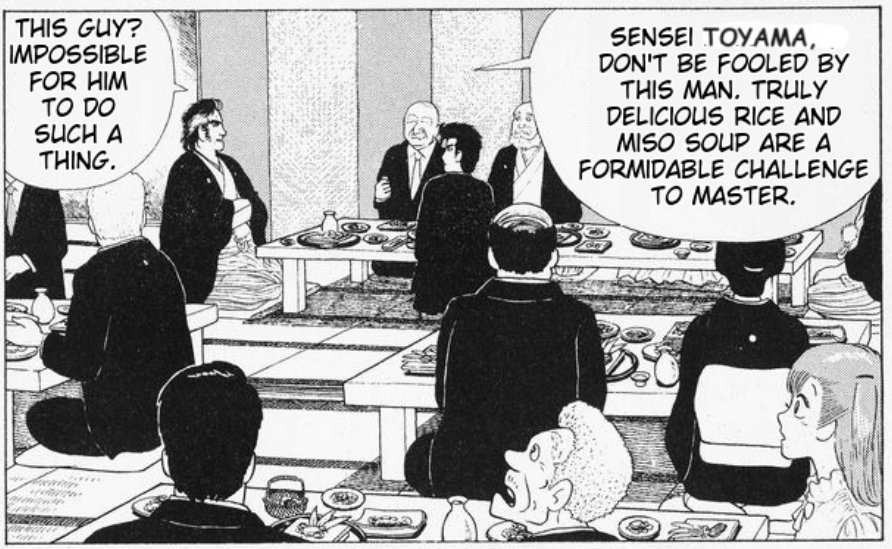
TOJIN-KUN IS TOO PICKY ABOUT FLAVORS, I MADE WIENER SAUSAGE MISO SOUP, AND HE GOT ALL RILED UP.
OHO, ISN'T IT ADORABLE? MAKING WIENER SAUSAGE MISO SOUP! THAT UNIQUE QUIRK IS WHAT MAKES REIKO SO CHARMING, YOU SEE.
HEY, HOLD YOUR HORSES, SHIRO, I ACTUALLY HAVE A SMALL FAVOR TO ASK.
COME ON, WHAT'S THE DEAL? SPIT IT OUT ALREADY.
REIKO IS AN AMAZING WOMAN, BUT ALAS, THESE YOUNG ONES NOWADAYS JUST CAN'T SEEM TO COOK UP A STORM, YA KNOW.
I WANT YOU TO TEACH REIKO HOW TO COOK.
WELL... WHEN YOU TALK BASICS, YOU MEAN LIKE HOW TO COOK RICE AND MAKE MISO SOUP, RIGHT?
BUT BEING TOO UNIQUE CAN BE A PROBLEM. SHIRO, I'M COUNTING ON YOU TO KEEP IT SIMPLE AND TEACH THE BASICS.
WHAT?!
HAHA, CAN THIS GUY REALLY COOK UP A TASTY MEAL?


THIS GUY? IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO DO SUCH A THING.
SENSEI TOYAMA, DON'T BE FOOLED BY THIS MAN. TRULY DELICIOUS RICE AND MISO SOUP ARE A FORMIDABLE CHALLENGE TO MASTER.

I KNOW IT'S TOUGH TO COOK A GOOD MEAL!
I'M JUST SAYING IT'S EASY COMPARED TO A FANCY DISH!

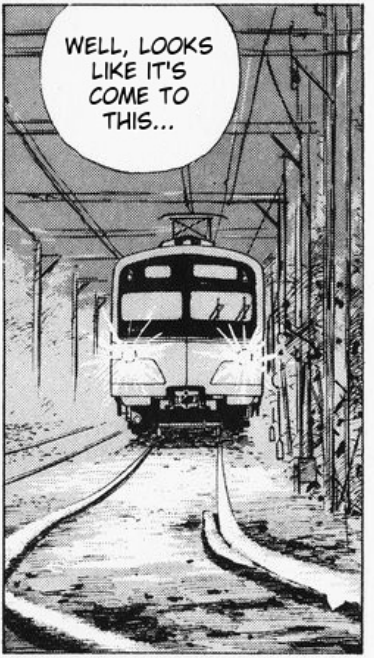
HO... YOU'RE TALKING BIG FOR SOMEONE WHO CAN'T EVEN WHIP UP A DECENT MEAL WITH JUST A FEW WORDS. YOUR TRUE COLORS ARE SHOWING, REVEALING YOUR INABILITY TO MAKE A DELICIOUS MEAL AND A DECENT MISO SOUP.
RIDICULOUS! COOKING RICE AND MISO SOUP ARE THE BASICS OF JAPANESE CUISINE. IF YOU CAN'T HANDLE SUCH SIMPLE TASKS, SPARE US YOUR FEEBLE EXCUSES!

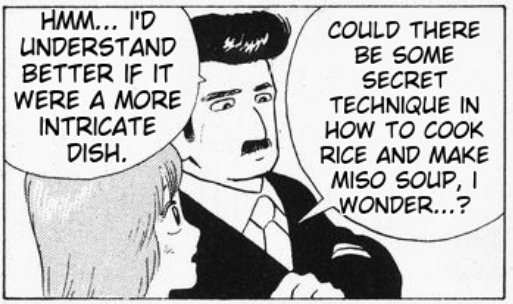
EASIER THAN A FANCY DISH?!
THE MORE YOU SPEAK, THE MORE YOU REVEAL YOUR OWN FOOLISHNESS.

I'LL BE THE JUDGE OF WHO MAKES THE BETTER MEAL AND MISO SOUP.
...WELL, INSTEAD OF JUST ARGUING, WHY DON'T YOU TWO HAVE A COOK-OFF?
HEY, HOLD YOUR HORSES, YOU TWO!
I WON'T STAND FOR A FIGHT AT MY JOYOUS OCCASION.
SURE THING, I HAVE NO OBJECTIONS.
ISN'T THAT SENSEI KAIBARA'S SON?
WAIT, ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT YUZAN KAIBARA AND THAT GUY ARE HAVING A COOK-OFF WITH RICE AND MISO SOUP?
DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT FIFTEEN YEARS AGO WHEN I HAD DINNER AT YOUR PLACE?
OH, GOODNESS ME! I SERVED SUCH A POOR DISH, I STILL FEEL EMBARRASSED ABOUT IT.
ALRIGHT THEN, YOU'RE DIGGING YOUR OWN GRAVE.
MOTOMURA, COOK THE MEAL AND MISO SOUP ON MY BEHALF!
WHAT, ME?!

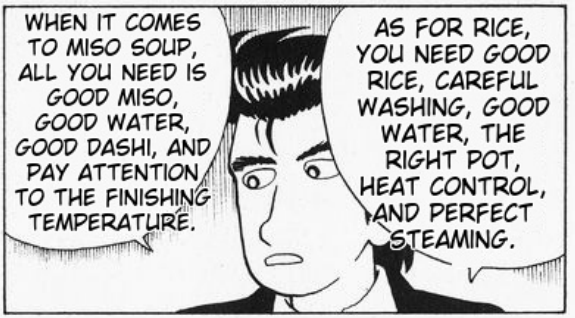
Y-YES!
CAN YOU CREATE THE EXACT SAME THING AS BACK THEN, HUH?!
ALRIGHT THEN, LET'S SETTLE THIS WITH A REMATCH OF RICE AND MISO SOUP, DEAL?!
I DON'T MIND AT ALL.
WHETHER YUZAN COOKS THE MEAL HIMSELF OR INSTRUCTS A PROXY TO DO IT, IT'S ALL THE SAME.
IS THIS CONDITION ACCEPTABLE TO YOU?
DON'T ACT ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY, YOU BASTARD!
YOU'VE BEEN FLAUNTING YOUR SHALLOW KNOWLEDGE OF COOKING LATELY AND GETTING QUITE COCKY. TIME TO BRING THE HAMMER DOWN ON YOU.

THEY'RE THE ONES WHO STARTED THIS FIGHT.

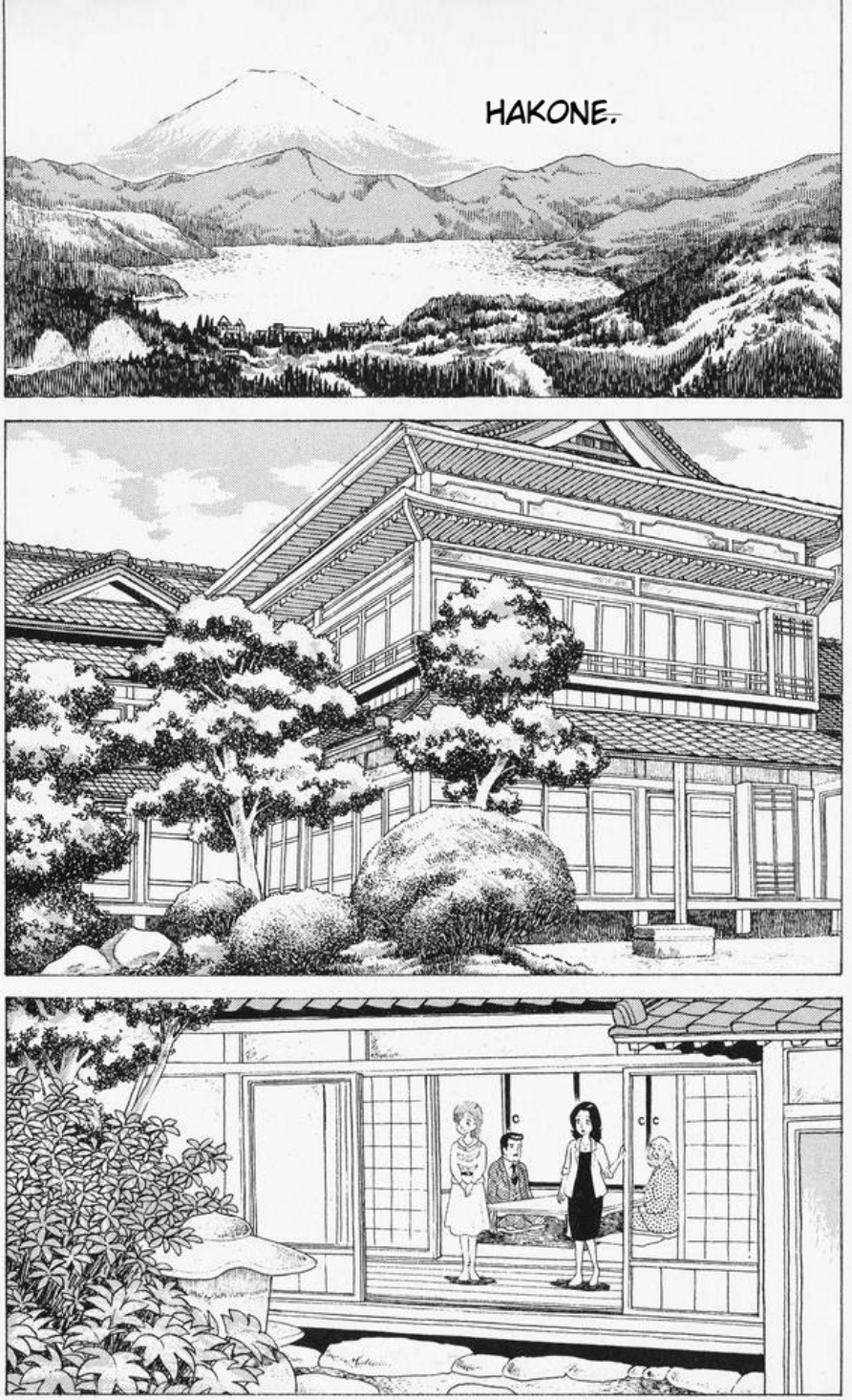

WELL, LOOKS LIKE IT'S COME TO THIS...


HMM... I'D UNDERSTAND BETTER IF IT WERE A MORE INTRICATE DISH.
COULD THERE BE SOME SECRET TECHNIQUE IN HOW TO COOK RICE AND MAKE MISO SOUP, I WONDER...?

WELL, JUST MEETING ALL THOSE CONDITIONS IS ALREADY QUITE A FEAT...

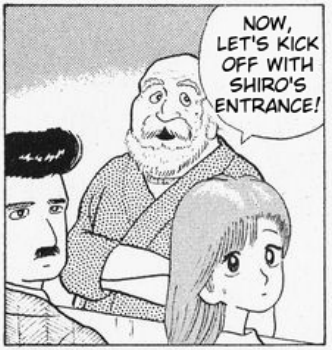

WHEN IT COMES TO MISO SOUP, ALL YOU NEED IS GOOD MISO, GOOD WATER, GOOD DASHI, AND PAY ATTENTION TO THE FINISHING TEMPERATURE.
AS FOR RICE, YOU NEED GOOD RICE, CAREFUL WASHING, GOOD WATER, THE RIGHT POT, HEAT CONTROL, AND PERFECT STEAMING.

:BUT WHEN KAIBARA YUZAN STEPS INTO THE RING, YOU KNOW THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN THAT.

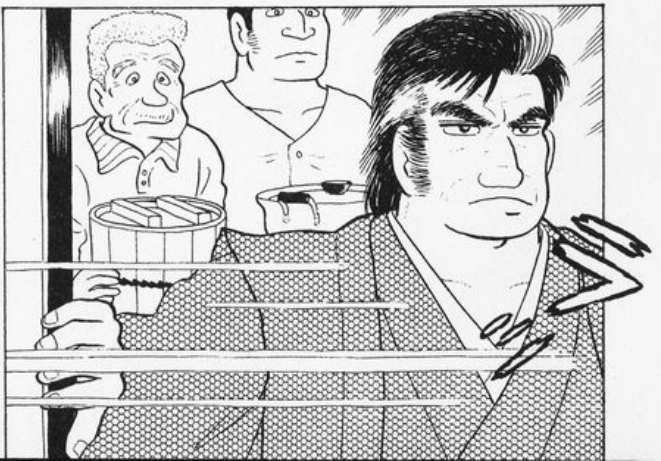

HAKONE.

IN THIS INN, BESIDES THE REGULAR KITCHEN FOR ORDINARY GUESTS, THERE'S ANOTHER KITCHEN FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS LIKE FOREIGN DIGNITARIES WITH RELIGIOUS DIETARY RESTRICTIONS. THEY HAVE TO KEEP THE FOOD STRICTLY SEPARATE, YOU SEE. THAT'S WHY THEY'VE GOT NOT ONE, BUT TWO KITCHENS HERE.
AND TO TOP IT OFF, BOTH KITCHENS ARE EQUIPPED WITH OLD-FASHIONED KAMADO STOVES, PERFECT FOR TODAY'S SHOWDOWN.

WHAT AN IMPRESSIVE INN!


NOW, LET'S KICK OFF WITH SHIRO'S ENTRANCE!

NEXT UP, THE GRAND ENTRANCE OF YUZAN KAIBARA.



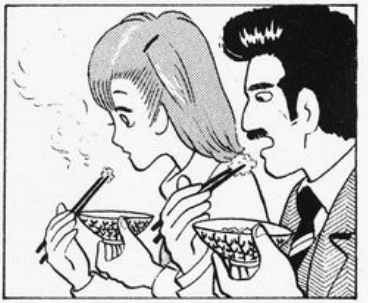
IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A BOXING TITLE MATCH, DOESN'T IT?

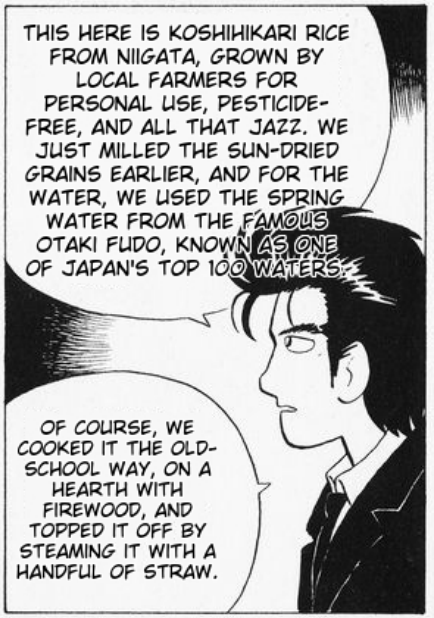
INDEED.

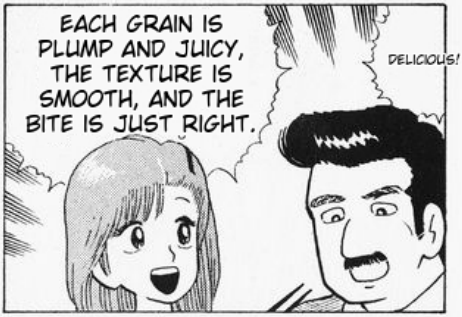
EVERYTHING IS READY.

THEY REALLY WENT ALL OUT WITH SELECTING THE INGREDIENTS, DIDN'T THEY?
WOW, IT SMELLS SO DELICIOUS!

SHIRO, WHY DON'T YOU GO FIRST...
NOW, LET'S TASTE THE FLAVOR, SHALL WE?




THIS HERE IS KOSHIHIKARI RICE FROM NIIGATA, GROWN BY LOCAL FARMERS FOR PERSONAL USE, PESTICIDE-FREE, AND ALL THAT JAZZ. WE JUST MILLED THE SUN-DRIED GRAINS EARLIER, AND FOR THE WATER, WE USED THE SPRING WATER FROM THE FAMOUS OTAKI FUDO, KNOWN AS ONE OF JAPAN'S TOP 100 WATERS.
OF COURSE, WE COOKED IT THE OLD-SCHOOL WAY, ON A HEARTH WITH FIREWOOD, AND TOPPED IT OFF BY STEAMING IT WITH A HANDFUL OF STRAW.


EACH GRAIN IS PLUMP AND JUICY, THE TEXTURE IS SMOOTH, AND THE BITE IS JUST RIGHT.
DELICIOUS!

THIS IS A SPLENDIDLY COOKED BATCH.
IT'S FLUFFY AND SWEET, ISN'T IT?

HE SPARED NO EXPENSE IN USING THE BEST BONITO FLAKES, AS WELL!
ズ…!
MMM, WHAT A DELICIOUS FLAVOR! THE RICH TASTE OF MISO AND THE FRAGRANCE OF DASHI BLEND TOGETHER SEAMLESSLY!
THE ESSENCE OF THIS MISO SOUP IS THE CLAMS.
IT'S NOT BLAND AT ALL, HUH?
THIS MISO IS MADE FROM PESTICIDE-FREE SOYBEANS AND AGED FOR TWO YEARS. THE BONITO FLAKES ARE MADE FROM THE FINEST BONITO FROM MAKURAZAKI. AND THE CLAMS ARE SOURCED ALL THE WAY FROM MATSUE.
SHALL WE SEE IF YOU CAN TASTE THE FLAVOR OF THE RICE THAT I HAVE PERSONALLY POLISHED?
WELL, PROFESSOR TOYAMA...
HEHEHE... WELL, WE SHALL SEE, WON'T WE?
EVEN IF YUZAN GOES ALL OUT, I WONDER IF THERE WILL STILL BE A DIFFERENCE COMPARED TO SHIRO'S RICE.
THE QUALITY OF THE RICE, THE EFFORT, THE SKILL—SHIRO'S RICE HAS TRULY REACHED THE PINNACLE, LEAVING NO ROOM FOR MEDIOCRITY!

THIS RICE IS!!
MMM!
IT'S TASTIER THAN MR. YAMAOKA'S COOKED RICE, DARLING! ♡
THE TEXTURE AND CHEWINESS ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!
SHIRO'S RICE STILL SMELLS TOO MUCH LIKE BRAN IN COMPARISON.
THERE'S INCONSISTENCY IN THIS COMPARED TO THAT. THE PLUMPNESS, LIKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DOWN COMFORTER AND A FIRM COTTON BLANKET. AND HOW ABOUT THE RICH SWEETNESS AND AROMA THAT ENVELOPS YOUR MOUTH WHEN YOU TASTE THIS...
SHIRO'S CAREFULLY COOKED RICE SEEMED FLAWLESS, BUT NOW, COMPARED TO THIS RICE, IMPERFECTIONS ARE STARTING TO REVEAL THEMSELVES.
IT SEEMS LIKE WE'VE REACHED A CONCLUSION.
SHIRO'S MISO SOUP TASTES BLAND COMPARED TO THIS... THE HARMONY OF CLAMS AND MISO CREATING A SYMPHONY OF FLAVOR IS ALL IN THIS BOWL HERE!
EVEN THOUGH THE CLAMS IN BOTH MISO SOUPS ARE THE SAME, THIS ONE HERE IS TASTIER.

BUT WHY DID SUCH A GAP APPEAR... EVEN MR. YAMAOKA DID HIS BEST...
UNFORTUNATELY, IT SEEMS THAT TOYAMA TOUJIN-SENSEI WAS RIGHT AFTER ALL.
OUCH...!
SHIRO, WHAT DO YOU THINK CAUSED THIS DIFFERENCE? TELL ME.
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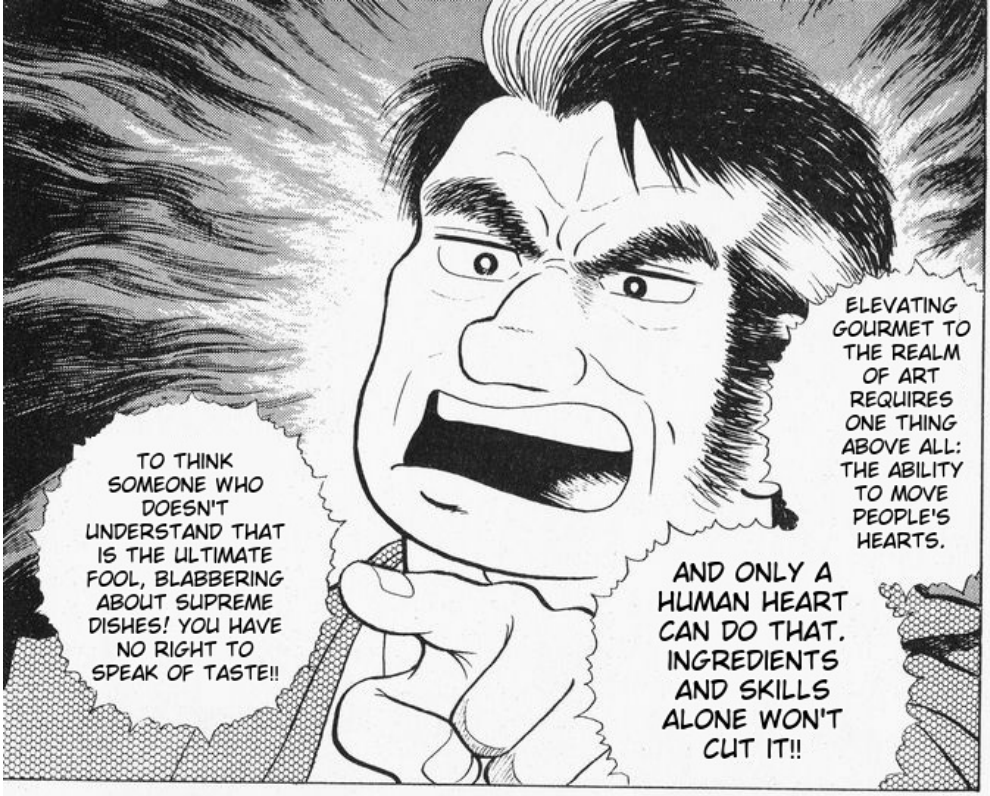
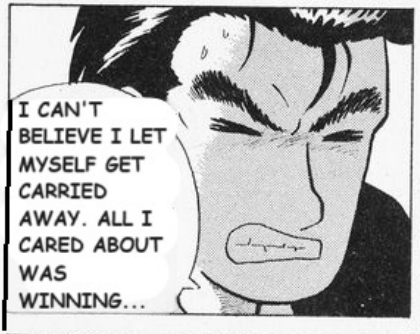
DARN IT!!
COME ON, I'LL SHOW YOU HOW HONMURA COOKED THIS RICE AND MADE THE MISO SOUP! GET READY!
THE RICE, MISO, BONITO FLAKES, AND CLAMS MUST HAVE ALL GATHERED THEIR ULTIMATE POWERS TO DEFEAT ME. THEY'RE LIKE A DREAM TEAM OF INGREDIENTS, HUH?
IT'S THE DIFFERENCE IN INGREDIENTS.
THE DIFFERENCE IN INGREDIENTS?!
DON'T YOU DARE UNDERESTIMATE MY ABILITY TO SEE THROUGH THINGS!!

SO, THE RICE IN THAT BOWL WAS METICULOUSLY HANDPICKED AND SORTED GRAIN BY GRAIN!
WHEN YOU SPREAD THEM OUT ON A BLACK TRAY, YOU CAN SEE EACH AND EVERY GRAIN OF RICE CLEARLY. ANY CHIPPED, CLOUDY, OVERLY LARGE, OR TOO SMALL GRAINS ARE CAREFULLY PICKED OUT AND DISCARDED.

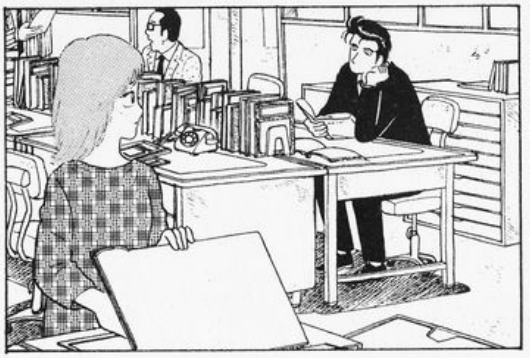
NEXT IS MISO, MADE BY FERMENTING WHOLE SOYBEANS INTO MISO PASTE.
THAT SUBTLE DIFFERENCE MADE A HUGE IMPACT ON THE FINAL FLAVOR.
THIS IS CRUCIALLY IMPORTANT. NO MATTER HOW CAREFULLY YOU CONTROL THE HEAT, IF THE SIZE OF THE RICE GRAINS IS UNEVEN, THE COOKED RICE WILL HAVE SUBTLE INCONSISTENCIES.
UGH...

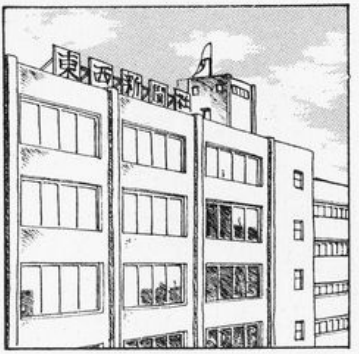
SO THAT'S THE SECRET OF DELICIOUSNESS! THE REFRESHING SCENT OF JAPANESE PEPPER ENHANCES THE AROMA OF THE MISO IN THE SOUP.
THESE ARE THE DRIED BRANCHES OF THE JAPANESE PEPPER TREE IN MY HOUSE, CUT A FEW DAYS AGO.
WHAT ABOUT THAT MORTAR?
BY ALIGNING THE SIZE OF THE CLAMS, THE COOKING BECOMES EVEN, ENSURING THE MISO SOUP WON'T BE BLAND.
TO PAY SUCH ATTENTION...!
LOOK AT THESE CLAMS NOW.
I'M NOT TELLING YOU TO DO THIS EVERY DAY, BUT I WANT TO KEEP THIS SINCERITY FOR MYSELF.
IF YOU DON'T GENUINELY WANT TO ENTERTAIN PEOPLE, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
YES!
SO, I THOUGHT I HAD TO DO MY BEST...
FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, WHEN MR. KAIBARA VISITED MY HOUSE, I WAS AT A LOSS ON HOW TO ENTERTAIN HIM. EVEN IF I WANTED TO OFFER A FEAST, BEING POOR, I COULDN'T AFFORD EXPENSIVE INGREDIENTS...
MOREOVER, IT SEEMS YOU'VE BEEN FEELING PRETTY HIGH AND MIGHTY LATELY, TRYING TO SHOW OFF WITH DISHES LIKE BONITO SASHIMI AND SUKIYAKI, BUT NOW THE TRUTH IS OUT THAT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND A THING.
I HEARD BEFORE HOW YOU IMPRESSED KYOGOKU-SAN WITH JUST RICE, MISO SOUP, AND DRIED SARDINES, AND I THOUGHT YOU WERE STARTING TO GET IT A BIT, BUT OH NO, YOU FOOLISHLY EXPOSED YOUR TRUE COLORS.


TO THINK SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THAT IS THE ULTIMATE FOOL, BLABBERING ABOUT SUPREME DISHES! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO SPEAK OF TASTE!!
ELEVATING GOURMET TO THE REALM OF ART REQUIRES ONE THING ABOVE ALL: THE ABILITY TO MOVE PEOPLE'S HEARTS.
AND ONLY A HUMAN HEART CAN DO THAT. INGREDIENTS AND SKILLS ALONE WON'T CUT IT!!


I CAN'T BELIEVE I LET MYSELF GET CARRIED AWAY. ALL I CARED ABOUT WAS WINNING...

DRIVEN BY A FIERCE DETERMINATION NOT TO LOSE TO KAIBARA YUZAN...





WHAT?! YAMAOKA QUIT HORSE RACING?!

HEY, YAMAOKA, WHAT'S YOUR PREDICTION FOR TOMORROW'S MAIN RACE?
DUNNO... I'VE QUIT HORSE RACING.

.....

DITCHING HORSE RACING, SOMETHING YOU LOVED SO MUCH...
EH?! ARE YOU ACTUALLY QUITTING?!
WOW, SO YOU'RE CRACKING THE WHIP ON YOURSELF TO GET SERIOUS ABOUT CREATING THE ULTIMATE MENU, HUH...

第9話

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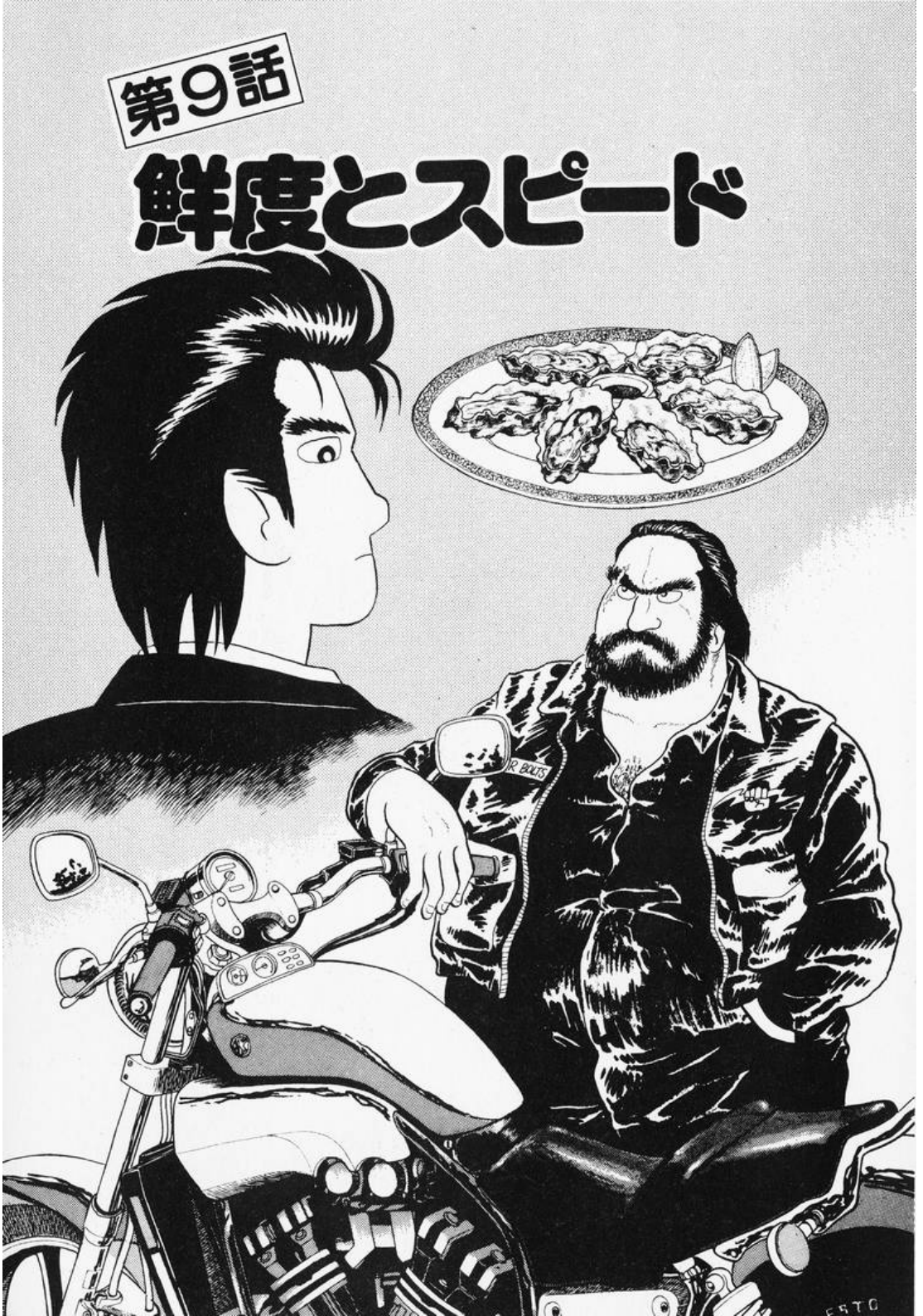
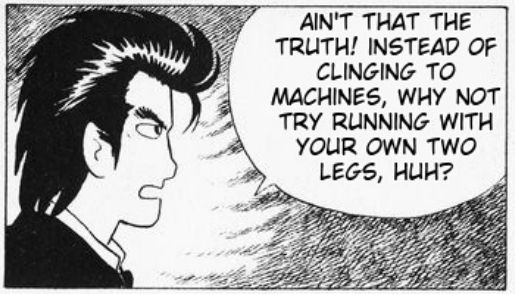


OH... DID YAMAOKA GET SCHOOLED BY YUZAN?
ELEVATING CUISINE TO THE REALM OF ART ISN'T JUST ABOUT INGREDIENTS AND COOKING TECHNIQUES; IT'S ABOUT MOVING PEOPLE'S HEARTS. UNTIL YOU UNDERSTAND THAT, YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO SPEAK OF TASTE!
KAIBARA BERATED YAMAOKA SAYING HE HAD NO RIGHT TO TALK ABOUT TASTE IF HE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND THAT.
YAMAOKA MUST BE FEELING DEFEATED AFTER LOSING AND BEING TOLD THAT, ALL OVER A SIMPLE MEAL OF RICE AND MISO SOUP.
THAT SOUNDS LIKE A LINE YAMAOKA WOULD USUALLY SAY, DOESN'T IT?

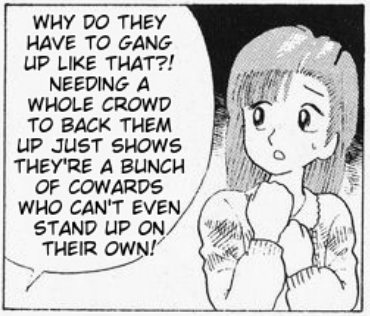
IT WAS SURPRISING TO HEAR KAIBARA YUZAN, WHOM I HAD THOUGHT TO BE AN ARROGANT AND COLD-HEARTED PERSON WHO DIDN'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT PEOPLE'S FEELINGS, SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
THAT'S PROBABLY WHAT MAKES KAIBARA-SAN SO AMAZING. HE ENCOMPASSES THE CONTRADICTORY NATURE OF BEING ABLE TO FATHOM THE DEPTHS OF THE HUMAN HEART WHILE RUTHLESSLY TRAMPLING UPON IT WITH INDIFFERENCE.
THE SIZE AND COMPLEXITY OF THAT PERSON MUST BE THE SECRET BEHIND KAIBARA YUZAN'S ART, DON'T YOU THINK?
HE'S NOT A SIMPLE HUMAN BEING THAT ORDINARY FOLKS LIKE US CAN EASILY GRASP.
WHAT?!
IT'S YAMAOKA..
DIRECTOR TANIMURA, THIS IS A BIG DEAL!

THUNDER BOLTS
THUNDER BOLTS
TOKYO
WE WEAKLINGS JUST LIKE TO FLOCK TOGETHER, DON'T WE!!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WROTE THIS ARTICLE, HUH!!


AIN'T THAT THE TRUTH! INSTEAD OF CLINGING TO MACHINES, WHY NOT TRY RUNNING WITH YOUR OWN TWO LEGS, HUH?

THEY'RE HAPPILY BASKING IN THE ILLUSION OF MACHINE POWER AS THEIR OWN,
BUT WHAT ARE THEY COMPARED TO MEN WHO CAN ONLY RUN SLOWER THAN A TURTLE WITH THEIR OWN LEGS!!

SO, BY WRITING ARTICLES BASHING THUNDERBOLTS LIKE THIS, YOU EARN PRAISE FROM THE MASSES, BE HAILED AS A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN, AND RAKE IN POINTS FOR THE NEWSPAPER! IT'S A WIN-WIN-WIN SITUATION, BABY!!
WHAT THE HECK!!


WHY DO THEY HAVE TO GANG UP LIKE THAT?! NEEDING A WHOLE CROWD TO BACK THEM UP JUST SHOWS THEY'RE A BUNCH OF COWARDS WHO CAN'T EVEN STAND UP ON THEIR OWN!

IF YOU'RE FEELING UNSATISFIED, JUST GO OUT THERE AND CHALLENGE THE WORLD WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT. SHOW THEM WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF!
DON'T MESS AROUND! I CAN'T STAND THE BOSS'S CAREFREE ATTITUDE. GROWN MEN CLINGING TO NOISY, EXHAUST-SPEWING MACHINES AND RIDING AROUND LIKE THAT. IT'S JUST UNBEARABLE!

TIE HIM UP WITH CHAINS BEHIND A BIKE AND DRAG HIM ALL OVER TOKYO! LET'S DO THIS!!
B-BOSS...! I-I MEAN, COME ON...
HEY, HOLD UP, DON'T GET ALL RILED UP...
THIS GUY HAS BEEN SPOUTING OFF WHATEVER HE PLEASES! ALRIGHT, JUST AS HE WISHES, I'LL SETTLE THIS ONE-ON-ONE WITH HIM. COME ON OUT AND FACE ME, YOU COWARD!

HEY, I'M TELLING YOU TO WAIT!!
HEY, YOU'RE YAMAOKA, RIGHT? WE DIDN'T BRING A WHOLE SQUAD HERE TO HASSLE YOU OR TO CAUSE A FIGHT. IT'S TO EMPHASIZE OUR PROTEST AGAINST YOUR ARTICLE.
WE LOVE BIKES, MAN. IT'S JUST HOW WE ROLL. WE ALL CLICKED AND FORMED THIS GROUP. IT'S A WAY OF LIFE FOR US. IF YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT, DON'T YOU THINK IT'S ONLY NATURAL WE WON'T BE COOL UNTIL WE EXCHANGE A FEW WORDS?
AND HEY, YOU CALL US COWARDS, BUT LET ME TELL YOU, COWARDS CAN'T PUSH IT TO OVER 200 KILOMETERS PER HOUR, MAN.
HANGING ON TO A BIKE SPEEDING AT OVER 200 KILOMETERS PER HOUR SURE TAKES SOME GUTS, DOESN'T IT?

THUNDER BOLTS
TOKYO

I GET IT, YOU'VE GOT A BEEF WITH BIKERS.
BUT A MAN WHO'S NEVER BRAVED THE 200-KILOMETER-PER-HOUR WIND DOESN'T UNDERSTAND A THING ABOUT US.
THAT'S ALL WE WANTED TO SAY.

THIS... IS THEM, FOR SURE!

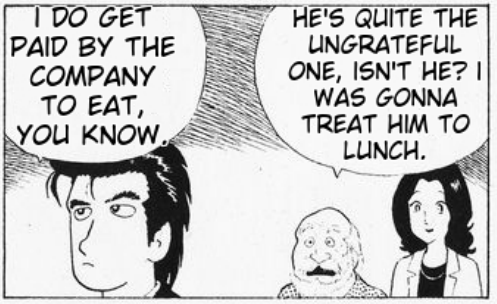
I WAS REALLY WONDERING HOW THIS WOULD TURN OUT...
THAT WAS TERRIFYING!

I'M FINE, DON'T WORRY.
YAMAOKA, ARE YOU OKAY?

鋼鉄の馬にまたがった暴走族

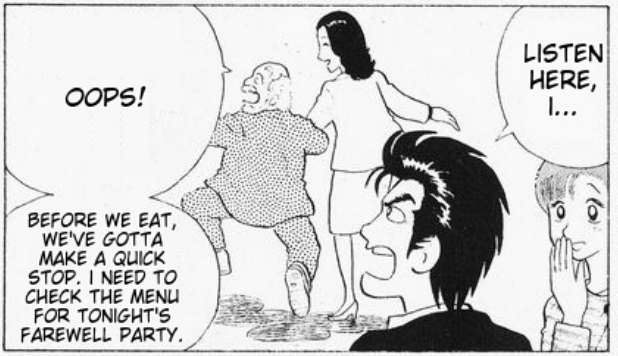
INDEED, THAT'S A WORLD I'VE NEVER KNOWN...
TRYING TO GO AGAINST THE WIND AT 200 KILOMETERS PER HOUR...!

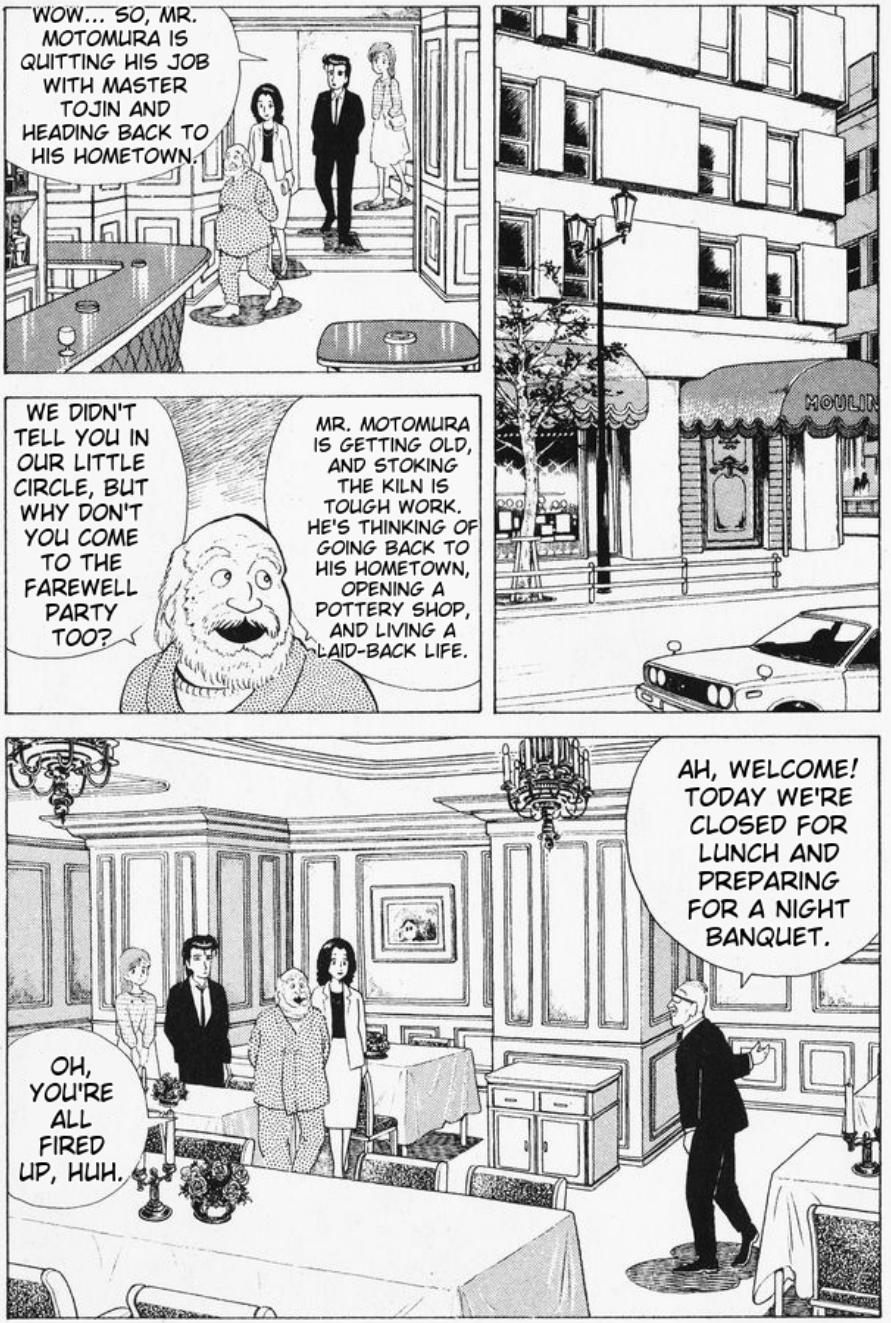
ACE

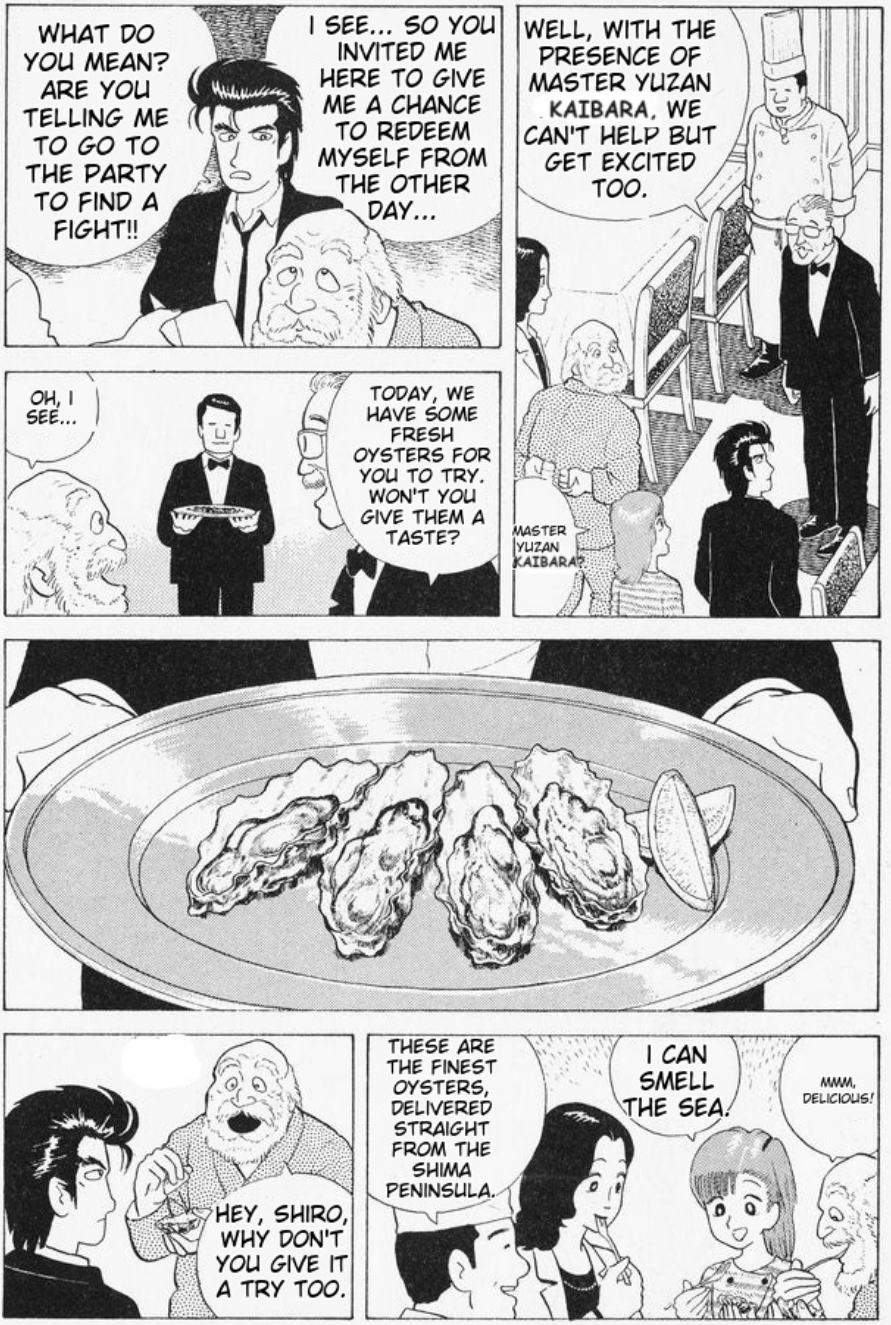

I DO GET PAID BY THE COMPANY TO EAT, YOU KNOW.
HE'S QUITE THE UNGRATEFUL ONE, ISN'T HE? I WAS GONNA TREAT HIM TO LUNCH.

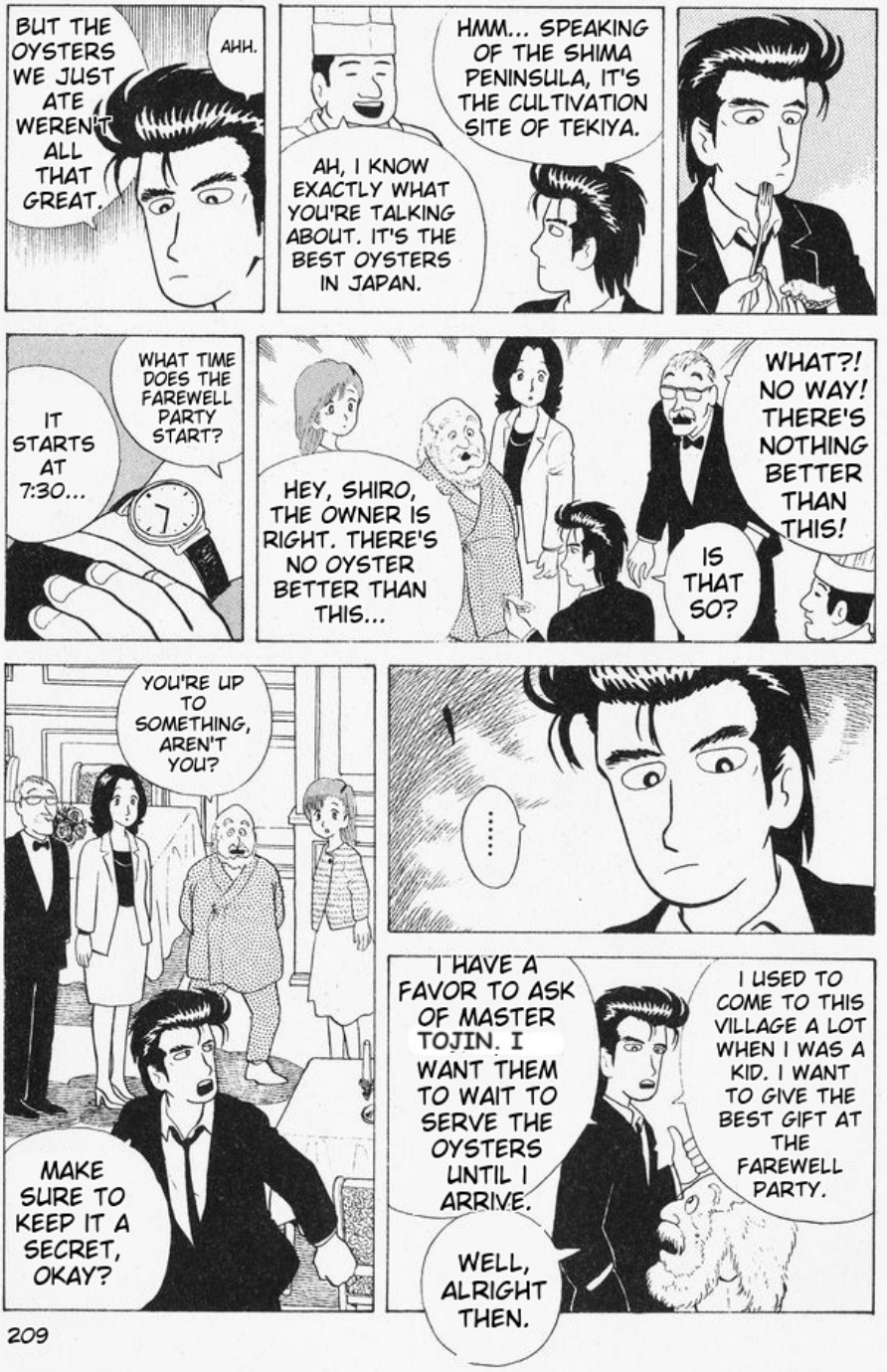
DON'T COME TO THE OFFICE SO OFTEN.

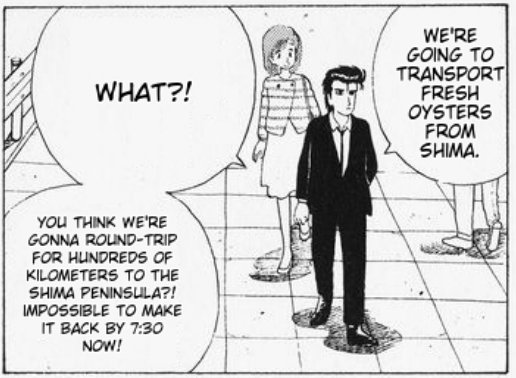
HMPH... RIDICULOUS.
OH MY, WHAT A FOUL MOOD. IS THIS SOME KIND OF LINGERING TRAUMA FROM GETTING KNOCKED DOWN BY THE GREAT OCEAN WAVES OF MOUNT YUZAN?

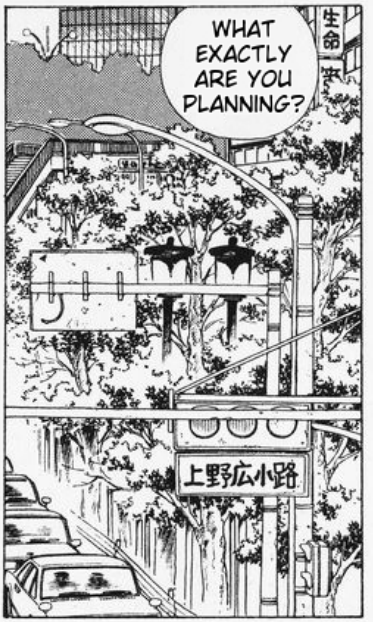

OOPS!
LISTEN HERE, I...
BEFORE WE EAT, WE'VE GOTTA MAKE A QUICK STOP. I NEED TO CHECK THE MENU FOR TONIGHT'S FAREWELL PARTY.

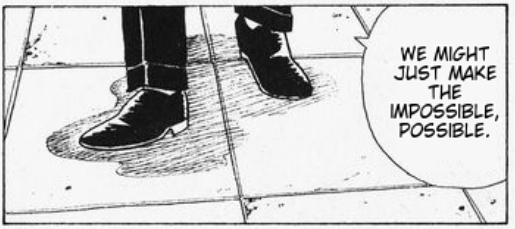

WOW... SO, MR. MOTOMURA IS QUITTING HIS JOB WITH MASTER TOJIN AND HEADING BACK TO HIS HOMETOWN.
MOULIN
WE DIDN'T TELL YOU IN OUR LITTLE CIRCLE, BUT WHY DON'T YOU COME TO THE FAREWELL PARTY TOO?
MR. MOTOMURA IS GETTING OLD, AND STOKING THE KILN IS TOUGH WORK. HE'S THINKING OF GOING BACK TO HIS HOMETOWN, OPENING A POTTERY SHOP, AND LIVING A LAID-BACK LIFE.
AH, WELCOME! TODAY WE'RE CLOSED FOR LUNCH AND PREPARING FOR A NIGHT BANQUET.
OH, YOU'RE ALL FIRED UP, HUH.

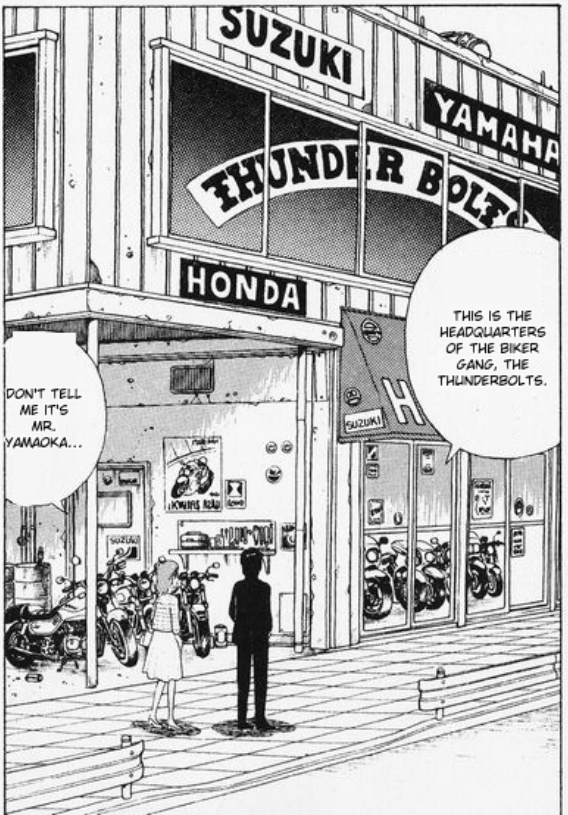

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? ARE YOU TELLING ME TO GO TO THE PARTY TO FIND A FIGHT!!
I SEE... SO YOU INVITED ME HERE TO GIVE ME A CHANCE TO REDEEM MYSELF FROM THE OTHER DAY...
WELL, WITH THE PRESENCE OF MASTER YUZAN KAIBARA, WE CAN'T HELP BUT GET EXCITED TOO.
MASTER YUZAN KAIBARA?
OH, I SEE...
TODAY, WE HAVE SOME FRESH OYSTERS FOR YOU TO TRY. WON'T YOU GIVE THEM A TASTE?
HEY, SHIRO, WHY DON'T YOU GIVE IT A TRY TOO.
THESE ARE THE FINEST OYSTERS, DELIVERED STRAIGHT FROM THE SHIMA PENINSULA.
I CAN SMELL THE SEA.
MMM, DELICIOUS!

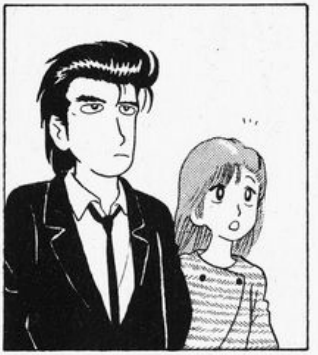

BUT THE OYSTERS WE JUST ATE WEREN'T ALL THAT GREAT.
AHH.
HMM... SPEAKING OF THE SHIMA PENINSULA, IT'S THE CULTIVATION SITE OF TEKIYA.
AH, I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT. IT'S THE BEST OYSTERS IN JAPAN.
WHAT TIME DOES THE FAREWELL PARTY START?
IT STARTS AT 7:30...
HEY, SHIRO, THE OWNER IS RIGHT. THERE'S NO OYSTER BETTER THAN THIS...
IS THAT SO?
WHAT?! NO WAY! THERE'S NOTHING BETTER THAN THIS!
YOU'RE UP TO SOMETHING, AREN'T YOU?
MAKE SURE TO KEEP IT A SECRET, OKAY?
.....
I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK OF MASTER TOJIN. I WANT THEM TO WAIT TO SERVE THE OYSTERS UNTIL I ARRIVE.
I USED TO COME TO THIS VILLAGE A LOT WHEN I WAS A KID. I WANT TO GIVE THE BEST GIFT AT THE FAREWELL PARTY.
WELL, ALRIGHT THEN.


WHAT?!
WE'RE GOING TO TRANSPORT FRESH OYSTERS FROM SHIMA.
YOU THINK WE'RE GONNA ROUND-TRIP FOR HUNDREDS OF KILOMETERS TO THE SHIMA PENINSULA?! IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE IT BACK BY 7:30 NOW!


WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU PLANNING?
上野広小路


WE MIGHT JUST MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE, POSSIBLE.


SUZUKI
YAMAHA
HONDA
DON'T TELL ME IT'S MR. YAMAOKA...
THIS IS THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE BIKER GANG, THE THUNDERBOLTS.



WELL, WHAT'S THIS PLACE?

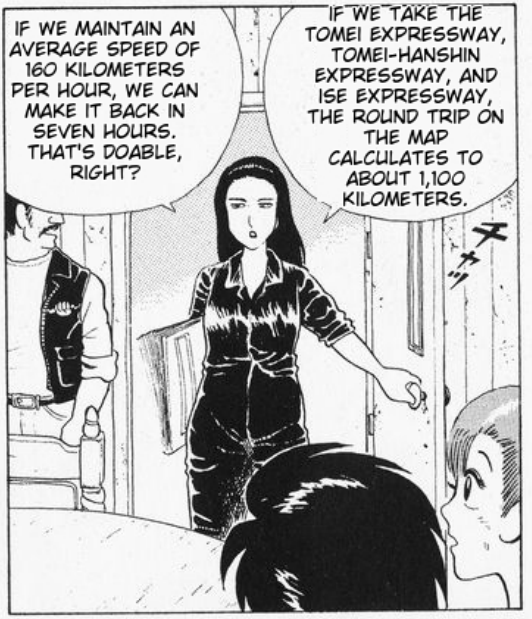
WHAT?! YOU WANT TO GO ALL THE WAY TO THE TIP OF THE SHIMA PENINSULA AND BACK BY 7:30?!
THAT'S WAY TOO FAR TO GO AND COME BACK IN ONE DAY!
NDER BOLTS
THUDER BOLTS
WE'RE LOOKING AT OVER A THOUSAND KILOMETERS ROUND TRIP! WE'VE GOT NO MORE THAN SEVEN HOURS AND TWENTY MINUTES IF WE LEAVE RIGHT NOW!
IF WE COULD MAINTAIN A SPEED OF 200 KM/H, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO COVER 1,300 KILOMETERS IN SIX AND A HALF HOURS.
DAMN IT! WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT 'DEFYING A 200 KM/H WIND' WAS JUST A PIPE DREAM.
IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!
WELL, HELL, I MEAN, EVEN IF IT WERE A SHORT TIME, THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN SUSTAIN A SPEED OF 200 KM/H FOR SIX AND A HALF HOURS.

NO WAY I'M FALLING FOR THIS GUY'S SWEET TALK!
BOSS, THIS IS RECKLESS!
WHO'S UP FOR COMING ALONG?
GET MY BIKE READY!

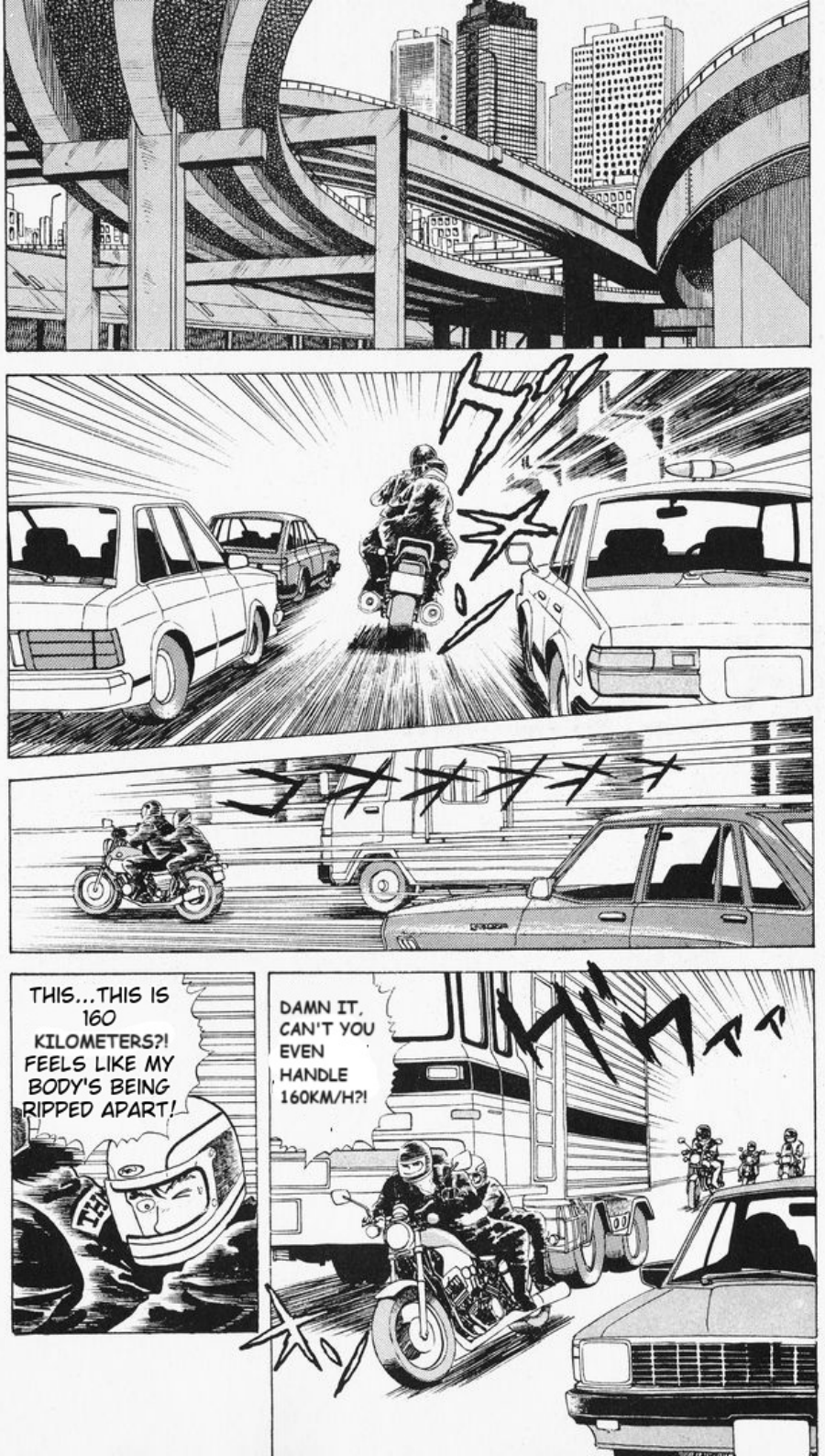
BOSS, EVEN IF YOU SAY THAT...
THIS GUY IS CHALLENGING ME TO A FIGHT. IF I DON'T ACCEPT, WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE DOWN THE THUNDERBOLTS SIGN.

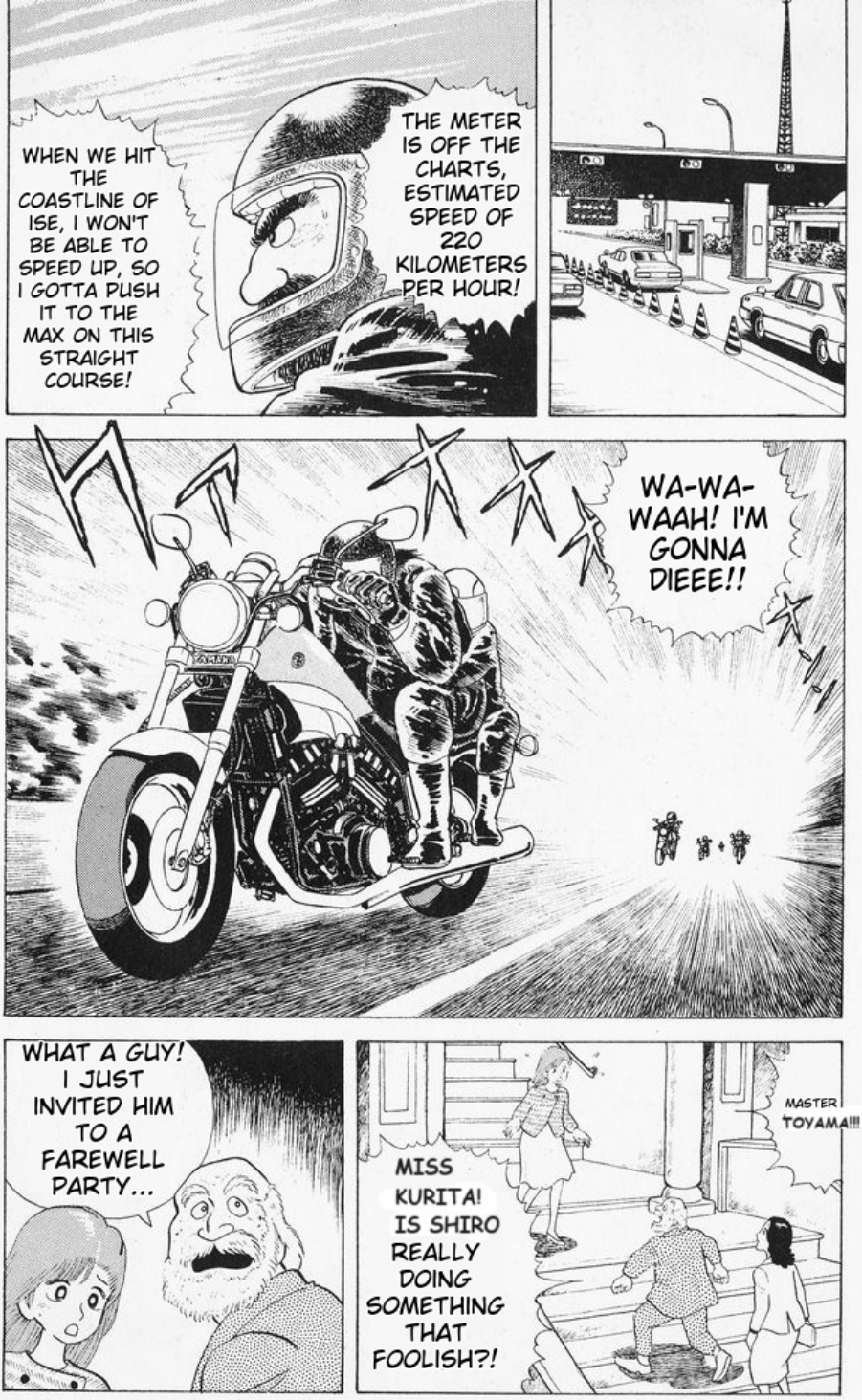
YOU GO AHEAD!

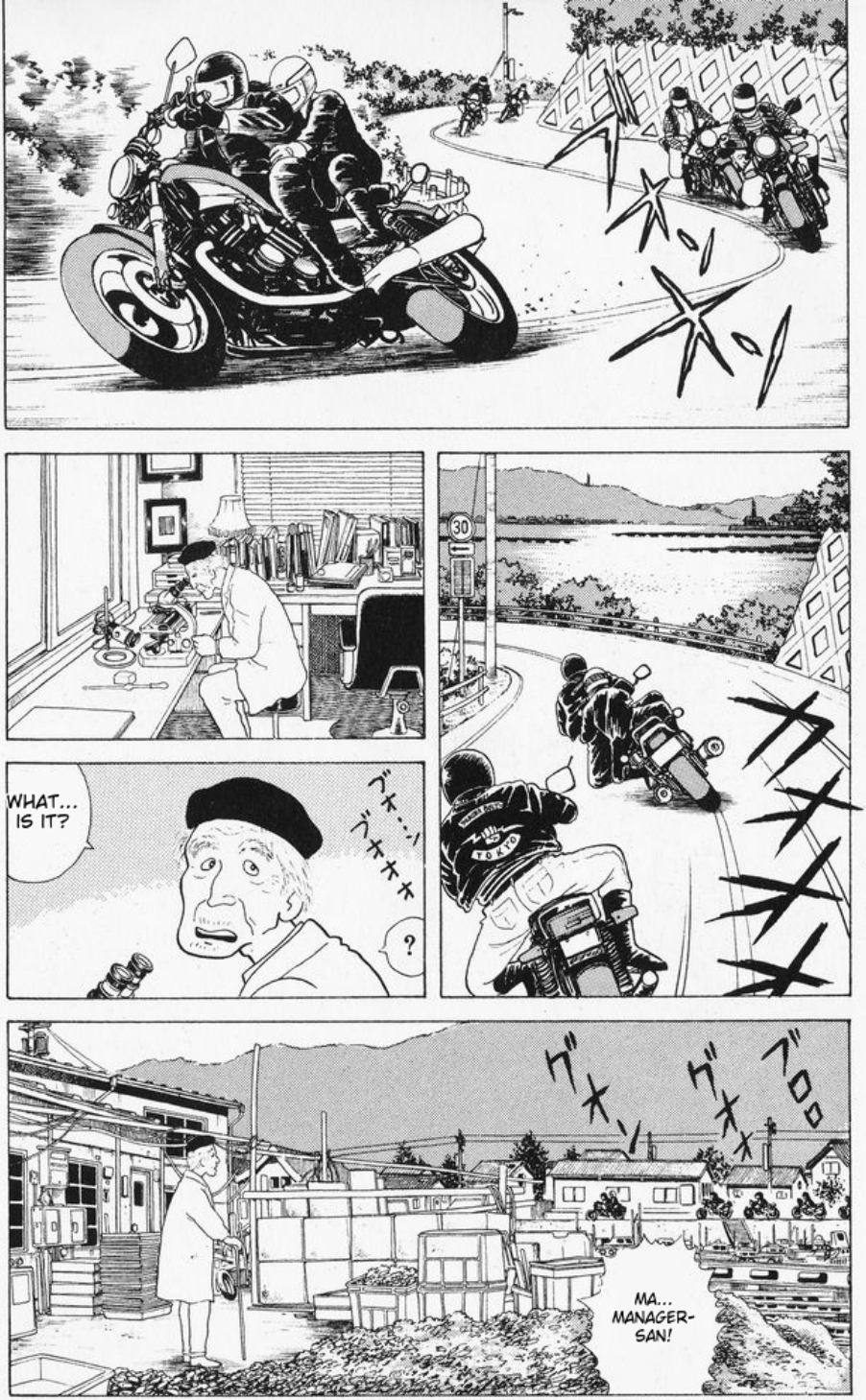
YEAH!


IF WE MAINTAIN AN AVERAGE SPEED OF 160 KILOMETERS PER HOUR, WE CAN MAKE IT BACK IN SEVEN HOURS. THAT'S DOABLE, RIGHT?
IF WE TAKE THE TOMEI EXPRESSWAY, TOMEI-HANSHIN EXPRESSWAY, AND ISE EXPRESSWAY, THE ROUND TRIP ON THE MAP CALCULATES TO ABOUT 1,100 KILOMETERS.

OF COURSE! IF I DON'T GO, WHO ELSE IS GOING TO CHOOSE THE OYSTERS?
WHAT? YAMAOKA-SAN IS COMING TOO?!
HOLD ON TIGHT TO ME, LOOSEN UP EVEN A BIT, AND YOU'LL BE FLYING OFF THE BIKE!
DON'T WORRY.
STOP THAT, IT'S DANGEROUS!
YAMAOKA-SAN!
WATCH OUT!
LET'S GO!


THIS...THIS IS 160 KILOMETERS?! FEELS LIKE MY BODY'S BEING RIPPED APART!
DAMN IT, CAN'T YOU EVEN HANDLE 160KM/H?!


WHEN WE HIT THE COASTLINE OF ISE, I WON'T BE ABLE TO SPEED UP, SO I GOTTA PUSH IT TO THE MAX ON THIS STRAIGHT COURSE!
THE METER IS OFF THE CHARTS, ESTIMATED SPEED OF 220 KILOMETERS PER HOUR!
WA-WA-WAAH! I'M GONNA DIEEE!!
WHAT A GUY! I JUST INVITED HIM TO A FAREWELL PARTY...
MISS KURITA! IS SHIRO REALLY DOING SOMETHING THAT FOOLISH?!
MASTER TOYAMA!!!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WHAT... IS IT?
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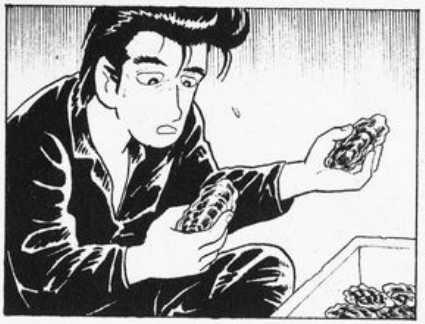
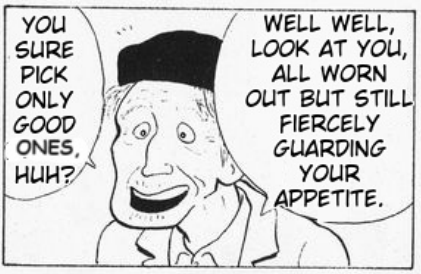
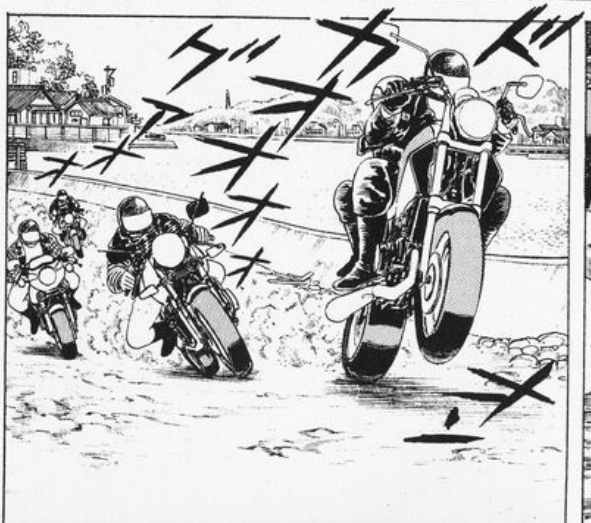
MA... MANAGER-SAN!

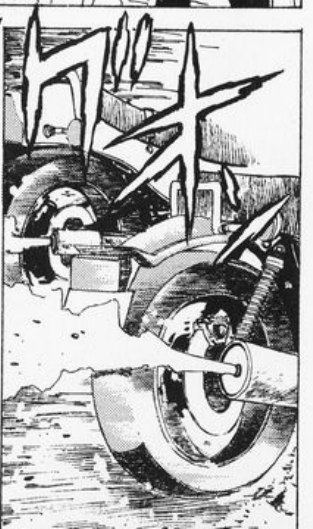


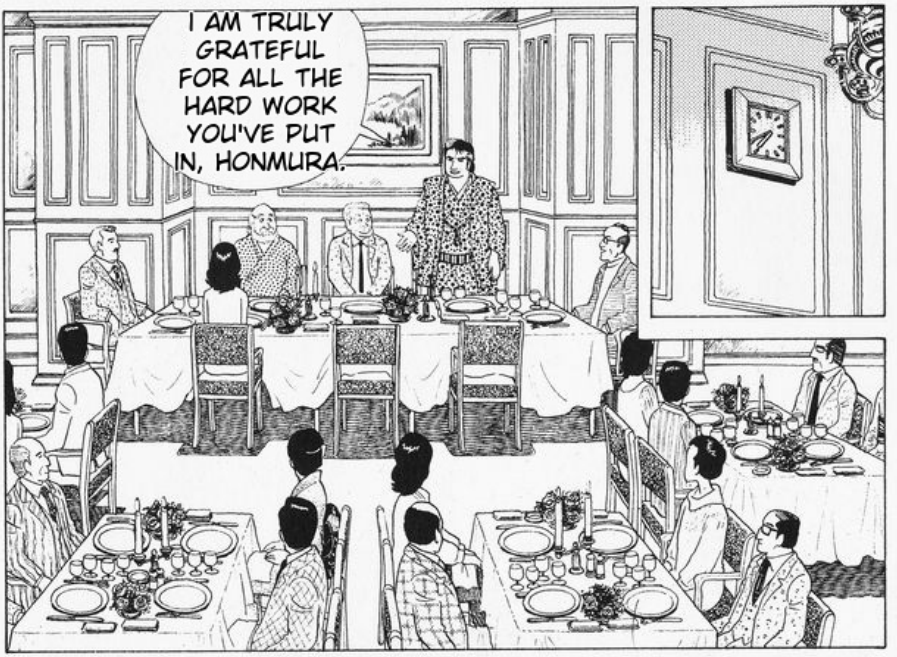

YOU SURE PICK ONLY GOOD ONES, HUH?
WELL WELL, LOOK AT YOU, ALL WORN OUT BUT STILL FIERCELY GUARDING YOUR APPETITE.

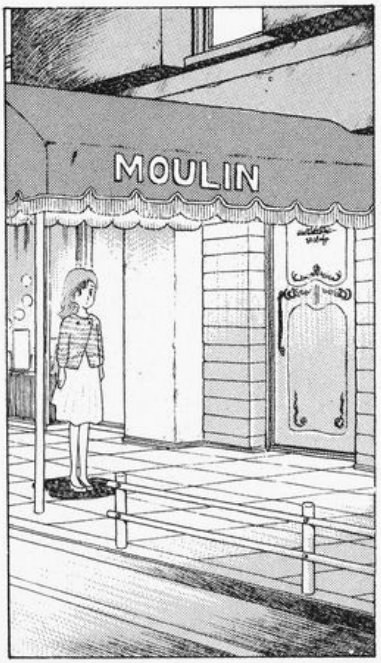
ALRIGHT, LET'S HEAD BACK!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT TAKE CARE, AND GIVE MY REGARDS TO MASTER TOYAMA!
WELL THEN, MANAGER, THANK YOU VERY MUCH...






I AM TRULY GRATEFUL FOR ALL THE HARD WORK YOU'VE PUT IN, HONMURA.


MOULIN

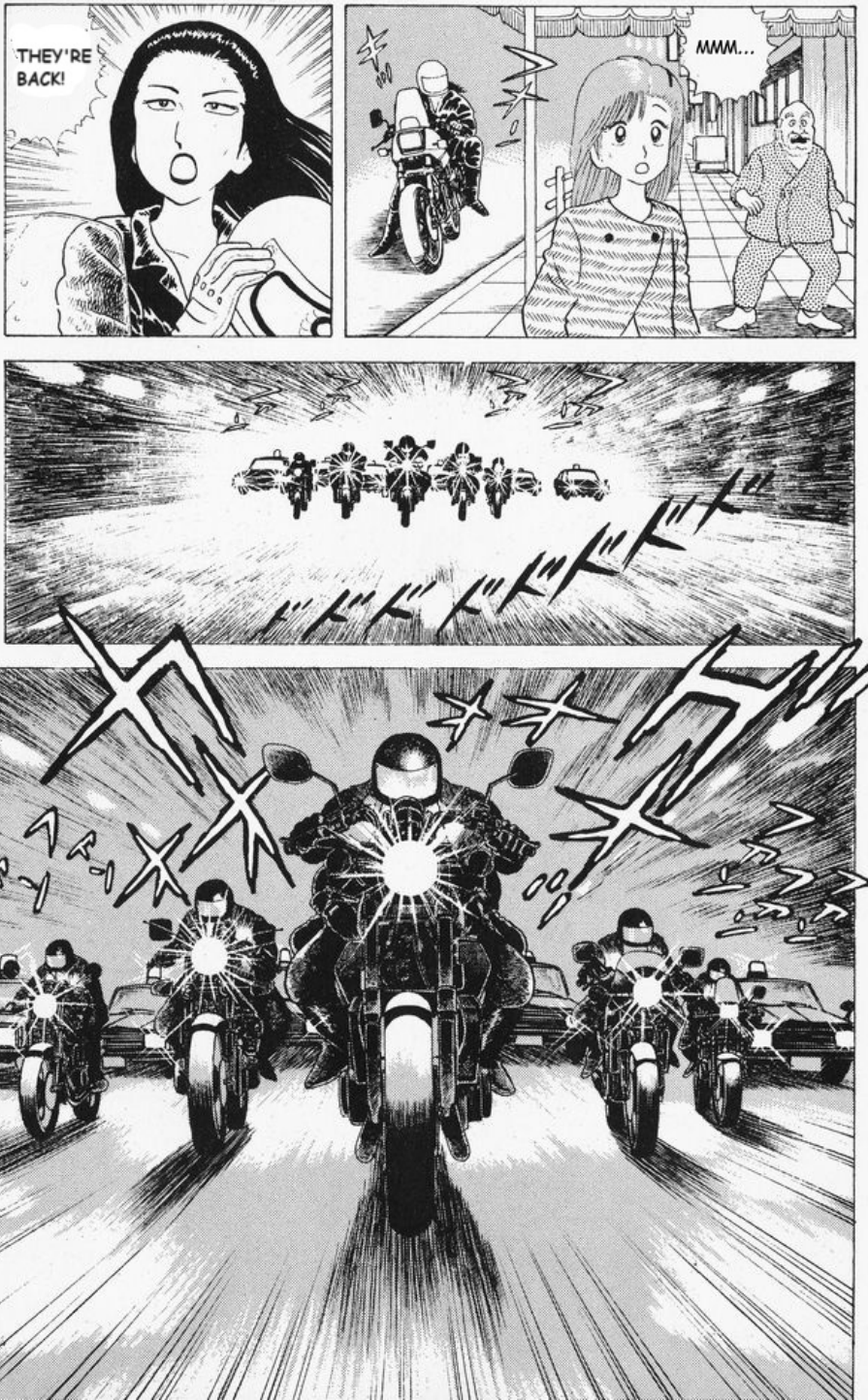
THANK YOU, PROFESSOR KAIBARA. I'M SO GRATEFUL FOR YOUR KIND WORDS.

PLEASE EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT...
カチ

HMM... I'LL TRY TO DELAY SERVING THE OYSTERS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.
OKAY!
KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THEM, ALRIGHT?
NO, NOT YET...
IS SHIRO STILL NOT HERE?
IF HONMURA ISN'T AROUND, MY WORK MIGHT SUFFER IN QUALITY.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE ANY POWER...
WHY IS THE COOKING TAKING SO LONG? WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON!!
NOW, NOW, DON'T GET WORKED UP.
HE SEEMED QUITE UPSET ABOUT WHAT I DID THE OTHER DAY. I HOPE HE'LL STILL SHOW UP.
BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT HAPPENED TO SHIRO-SAMA?
HUH?
ON THE CONTRARY! SHIRO'S COMING! HE'S JUST TAKING CARE OF SOMETHING...

THERE'S NO WAY WE'LL MAKE IT ON TIME.
GOODNESS, THIS IS WAY TOO LATE...
SIGH...
ARE THEY STILL NOT READY... IT'S ALREADY PAST 8:30!
I DON'T CARE, JUST BRING THEM OUT.
I-I UNDERSTAND, IN THAT CASE...
WHY ARE WE DRAGGING OUR FEET? WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH HAVING THE HORS D'OEUVRES TAKE AN HOUR TO BE READY!!
YES, UM... TOYAMA-SENSEI TOLD ME TO WAIT FOR THE OYSTERS TO BE SERVED...
!!

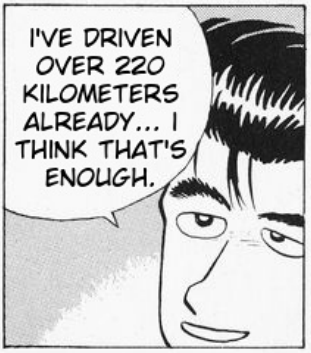
OISHINBO!

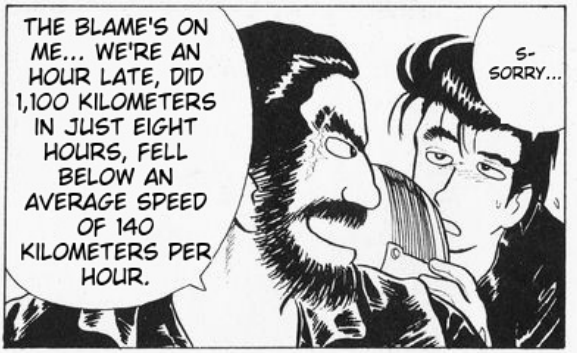


YAMAOKA-SAN!!

DON'T MAKE A FUSS, OFFICERS. ONCE I DROP OFF THIS GUY, I'LL DO AS YOU SAY!!

IT'S ILLEGAL TO HAVE TWO PEOPLE IN THE CAR ON THE HIGHWAY!!
THIS IS A CASE OF RECKLESS DRIVING IN PROGRESS!!
HEY, CALM DOWN! YOU ONLY NEED TO ARREST THE DRIVER, RIGHT!?

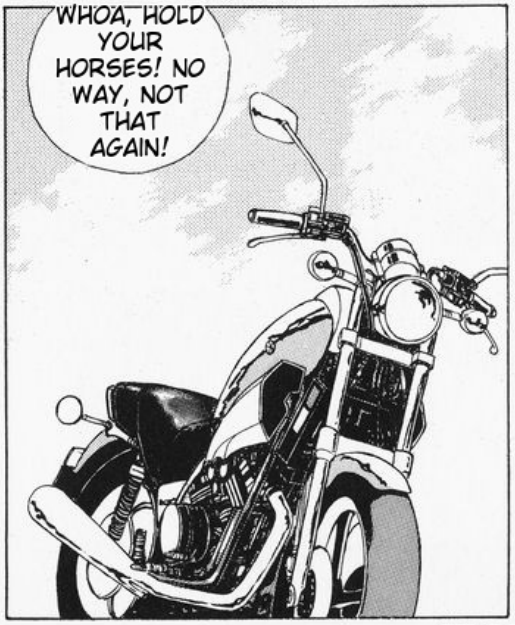

I'VE DRIVEN OVER 220 KILOMETERS ALREADY... I THINK THAT'S ENOUGH.


THE BLAME'S ON ME... WE'RE AN HOUR LATE, DID 1,100 KILOMETERS IN JUST EIGHT HOURS, FELL BELOW AN AVERAGE SPEED OF 140 KILOMETERS PER HOUR.
S-SORRY...

WHAT'S ALL THE COMMOTION!!
ガヤガヤ
YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!!
THESE GUYS ARE SOMETHING ELSE...
SHIRO-SAMA?! YOU'RE HERE!
SHIRO. YOU SCOUNDREL.
ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT, THE STAR OF THE HORS D'OEUVRES HAS FINALLY ARRIVED!
WHAT?

IS RAW OYSTER REALLY THIS DELICIOUS!!
SO DELICIOUS!!
IT'S BARELY BEEN FIVE HOURS SINCE THEY WERE HARVESTED. THESE OYSTERS AT THIS SHOP WERE PROBABLY OBTAINED NO EARLIER THAN YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, RIGHT?
THE FRESHNESS IS SIMPLY REMARKABLE!!
I THOUGHT THE OYSTERS HERE WERE TASTY, BUT COMPARING THEM, THEY'RE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!! THE AROMA IS REFRESHING, NOT FISHY, AND SWEET.
THANK YOU, SHIRO-SAMA! THIS DELICIOUS OYSTER WILL BE A MEMORY TO CHERISH FOR A LIFETIME!
THAT WASN'T MY INTENTION.
HMPH, IF YOU THINK THIS WILL REDEEM YOUR TARNISHED REPUTATION, YOU'RE SORELY MISTAKEN.
IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO REPAY THE KINDNESS I RECEIVED IN THE PAST BUT...

ARROGANT, AREN'T YOU... IT'S NOT THANKS TO YOU THAT THE OYSTERS TASTE GOOD. YOU SEEM PROUD OF BRINGING THEM QUICKLY, BUT IF YOU USED A HELICOPTER, THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN EVEN FRESHER AND TASTIER.
IN THE END, WHAT YOU DID WAS JUST MEANINGLESS SELF-SATISFACTION.
HEH... I DON'T CARE ANYMORE... I'M JUST SO SLEEPY RIGHT NOW...
THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS! YAMAOKA-SAN RISKED HIS LIFE TO BRING THEM...
I AM TRULY GRATEFUL BEYOND WORDS.
WHAT A GUY!
...N



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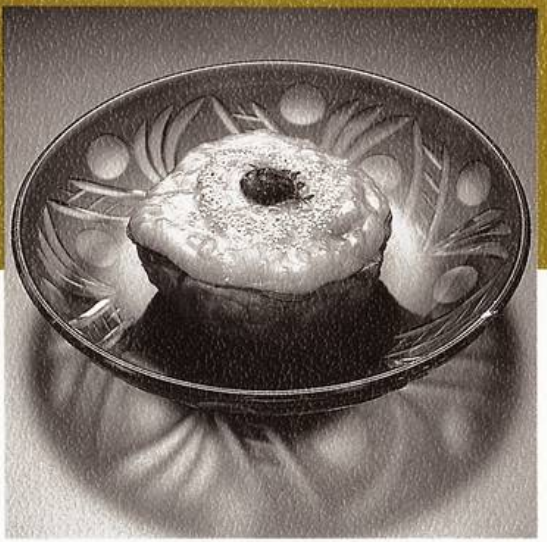

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